

# MILESTONE

2009

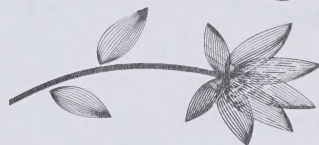




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# Milestone



Volume 8 2009

**Art & Literature Review**

**Creative Expressions of Western North Carolina Artists & Writers**  
*Southwestern Community College*

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*Mission Statement*

*Milestone* is the annual art and literature review published by Southwestern Community College. The purpose of this publication is to showcase the creative expressions of Western North Carolina artists and writers.

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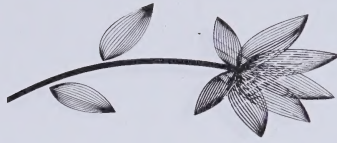


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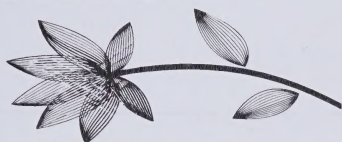


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**CHRIS PRUETT**  
**FIRST PLACE ~ ART**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**

## A Delicate Painting

JOYCE FOSTER

FIRST PLACE ~ POETRY

She was petite and young  
 holding a small boy's hand  
 and a large brimmed hat  
 watching the stately march  
 of the gray egret across  
 the still green meadow.  
 Trees framed the setting  
 their yellow and gold leaves  
 like tiny Chinese lanterns  
 lit by the reluctant sun.

It was as though I had walked  
 into a delicate Monet painting  
 a dark figure observing from afar.  
 The bird spread his giant wings  
 lifted effortlessly and glided  
 across the pond to the far side.

The woman turned and  
 startled at my presence  
 averted her face but not before I saw  
 her bruised eye, the dried blood  
 on the side of her nose  
 and the dark streak of mascara  
 smearing her swollen cheek.



Milestone



# The Journey Is Home

STEVE BRADY

FIRST PLACE ~ SHORT STORY

Eula finishes her coffee and watches the neighbor woman's hired girl washing dishes. It was nice of the neighbor woman to give her an invite for breakfast, but there are a million chores to do back home. Besides, breakfast is over and they ain't even visitin' no more. The neighbor woman seems to have disappeared without a word. Where did that woman go? She better be gettin' ready to take her back home. She better not be doin' chores of her own. Not when so many are waitin' at home.

She bristles over the injustice of this notion and fiddles with her empty cup and waits an eternity before the neighbor woman finally reappears. But when Eula jumps to her feet and announces she's ready to be taken home, instead of agreeing in a neighborly way, the woman says she's late for work and doesn't have time! As brassy as you please, she tells Eula to wait until that evening when she gets off work and says she *might* be able to take her home then. Eula sucks in her breath and prepares to give the neighbor woman a piece of her mind, but before she has time to get a single word out the inconsiderate woman rushes out the door and jumps in her car and drives away, leaving her stranded!

Eula clinches her teeth and balls her fists. She never would have agreed to come for a visit with the neighbor woman if she knew she would be forced to stay all day. She thinks again about all the chores that need to be done. She thinks about the children, Frank Jr., who is 8, and little Margaret, only 5 years old. Not that she's really worried about them. She left them at home with their daddy, Frank, when she came over to visit this morning. They'll follow him around while he finishes his morning chores. But Frank works part time at the tannery and will need to leave by noon. She ought to be home by then. She can't call Frank to come and get her in the truck because they have no telephone. And waiting



for the thoughtless neighbor woman is out of the question. There's really no choice—she will just have to walk.

It's a nuisance but no great feat. After all, she walked from home to school and back again three miles up and down Spring Creek... five days a week from the time she was seven until she turned sixteen and married Frank. It wasn't that many years ago either. She's still perfectly capable of a little walking. Besides, it's a warm day and if it rains, she "ain't no sugar or salt," as her mama used to say.

As she starts for the door, the neighbor woman's hired girl follows and tries to keep her from leaving. Maybe she wants Eula to stay and do *her* chores. Well, the lazy girl can think again. Eula flings the door open and strides across the porch. She shades her eyes and looks at the distant mountains where home lies. It doesn't look too far away. But as she starts down the driveway, the neighbor woman's dogs swarm around her. She tries to shoo them away, but they wag their tails and press against her in a frenzy of eager idiocy, impeding her progress homeward at every step.

Still trailing the pack in her wake, she reaches the end of the driveway and crosses the wooden bridge spanning the creek and starts down the mountain. She glances back and sees that the neighbor woman's hired girl is still following. The lazy girl probably aims on following her home so she'll have to wait on her there. Eula walks faster, hoping to lose her. The creek races alongside and she matches pace as they angle downhill. The eager dogs aren't giving up either. They continue swirling around until she finally loses her balance and nearly falls when one rushes between her legs. The girl calls the dogs back to her and they obey, but instead of turning around, the whole lot of them continue trailing at a distance.

Eula is furious that the girl seems hell bent on following her home without an invite. She lets the girl have a piece of her mind over her shoulder. She walks faster and pumps her arms, trying to loosen them. The creek races faster alongside too, plunging and tossing over rocks, and falls in its course down the mountainside.



Eula thinks about the chores again. So much to do. The garden coming in. Beans to pick and snap. Corn to shuck and shell. Canning to put up for winter. Stubborn hens sitting on eggs when they need to be gathered. So many needs and demands rushing and clamoring for her attention. It's exhausting.

She pushes harder, but when she reaches the foot of the mountain, her breath comes in painful gasps and her legs buckle. The creek rushes away, charged by the downward plunge, but the same descent has drained Eula and she can't match the pace. What's wrong with her? She staggers in the middle of the road on the verge of collapse. Luckily, a bench appears beside the road just in time and she sinks down on it, trembling and spent.

The girl catches up and asks if she is ready to go back to the neighbor woman's house. What a stupid question? Of course, she ain't ready to go back to the neighbor woman's house! She wants to go home! But she's too exhausted to walk either place now. The girl tells her to wait on the bench while she walks back to the house to get the car. Eula can't believe her ears. The girl has a car? Why couldn't she have offered to take her home? But Eula is wheezing too much to point this out, and the girl and her dogs disappear back up the road.

While Eula waits on the bench, her breath calms and she lapses into a reverie, listening to the voice of the creek running past and away, a hypnotic murmur that speaks of home and family and belonging. She is carried back in time to one Saturday when she was five or six years old and went to Hot Springs with her daddy. They usually rode in the wagon, but on this particular Saturday, the wagon was broken down and they had to walk instead. The journey there and back seemed endless, even though her daddy carried her on his shoulders when she couldn't keep up. When they finally returned home late that night, she complained to her mama that town had moved far away. And it seems like that now. Only now home has moved far away. Far away to the unreachable mountains where all the walking in the world can't take her. She dreams and listens to the voice of the creek tell lost stories of home until the girl arrives, loads





her in the car, and drives her back up the mountain to the neighbor woman's house.

That evening she sits in a rocker on the porch and watches as the neighbor woman comes home from work, pulls herself out of the car, and meets the hired girl in the driveway.

"How did it go today, Cynthia?"

"Not bad, Ms. Margaret. She tried walkin' home after breakfast. Gave out and sat down on the bench. Just like you said she'd do."

"You didn't have any trouble bringing her back?"

"No. But she sure cussed me a blue streak between startin' home and goin' back to 'the neighbor woman's.'" Cynthia forms quotation marks in the air with her fingers.

Margaret closes her eyes and sighs, "Well, I warned you. Before she came down with Alzheimer's, she never uttered a profanity in her life. Hope you can put up with it."

Cynthia waves her hand. "I've heard worse. Besides, she was good as gold after that. Dozed in her rockin' chair on the porch. Ate a good lunch. Dozed some more the rest of the afternoon."

"So you're sure you can handle it?"

"Sure. I've handled worse."

"Good, because I'd have to put her in a nursing home if I couldn't work. I was lucky to get an eight-hour shift at the hospital. Most of the RNs have to work twelve, you know."

"I don't mind at all. Really. And I need the money myself. Like I said, she ain't no trouble really."

Margaret takes a deep breath and lets it out in a rush, "You don't know what a relief it is to hear you say that. I was afraid you'd quit the first day. Going home up and down that mountain every day sure gets old."

"Don't you worry, Ms. Margaret. Like Miss Eula pointed out, I'm fat and lazy and need the exercise!"



The two women laugh, a bond of shared tribulation named Eula forming between them.

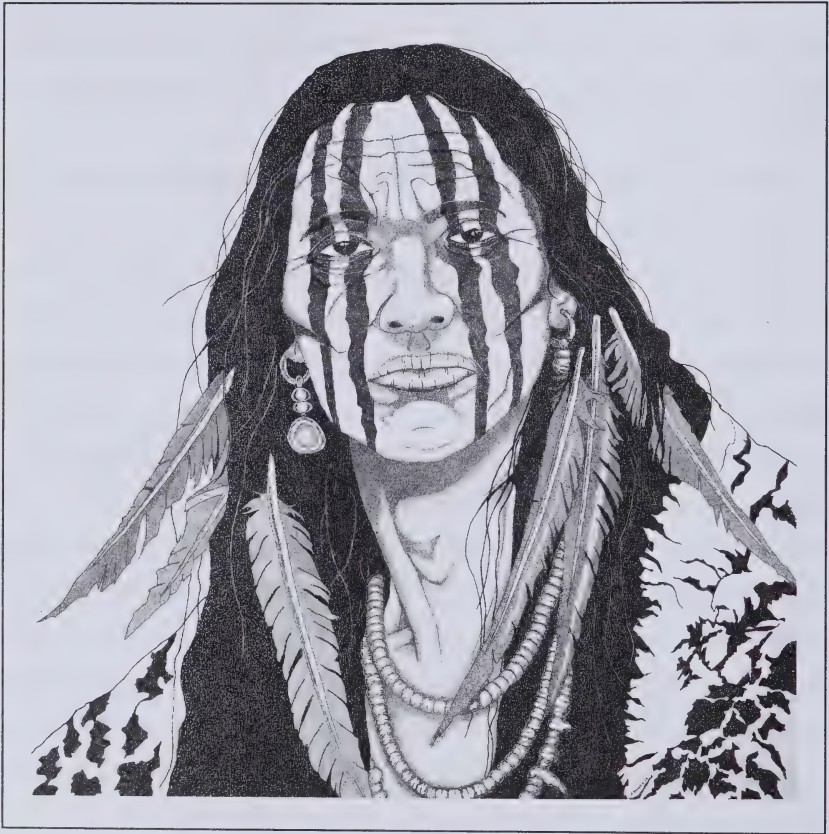
Margaret shakes her head and shrugs, "I must admit, it sure would be a lot easier if Mama knew me. But it is what it is. Well anyway, I imagine you need to get home to your own family. I'll take over now. See you in the morning, Cynthia."

"Oh, don't you worry, Ms. Margaret," Cynthia raises her forefinger and wags it as she gets into her car, "I'll be right here."

Eula can't hear what the two women are saying from her vantage point on the porch but suspects they're talking about her and plotting to keep her here. Why the neighbor woman wants her to stay and visit so long is a puzzle she can't piece together. Perhaps she's lonely. Eula's seen that aplenty in her lifetime. People get lonely. Especially in the mountains if they aren't accustomed to the quiet and isolation. An image of the neighbor woman crying flashes in her memory. It is an image without time or place, so she observes it and lets it drift away. Besides, the neighbor woman ought to learn to bear up. Maybe she needs herself a man. Or children of her own. But that's none of Eula's concern. Why should she know or care what the neighbor woman needs anyway? She only knows that she's tired of visiting with these strangers. No matter how kind they seem. No matter how well intentioned. She longs for the sight of familiar faces. For the faces of her husband and son and daughter. For the familiar face of home itself.

She sits up straight and determined and grabs the arms of the rocker and stares across the valley where the hills roll like a blue ocean to that distant place in time where the mountains of home sit silent and cryptic and eternal: "Just wait 'till tomorrow mornin'. If that damn neighbor woman don't take me home, I'm walkin'! And don't nobody try to stop me!"

*The ancient voice of the creek rushing away fills the twilight and answers in an inhuman tongue. Grinding rocks into pebbles and pebbles into sand; traveling and arriving and beginning again, it murmurs a greater truth in passing—the journey itself is home. ■*



**DON BOWEN**  
**SECOND PLACE ~ ART**  
**STIPPLE ILLUSTRATION**





# Treasured Trash

INA CLAIRE "SAM" BRYANT  
SECOND PLACE ~ POETRY

There is something  
about a plastic grocery bag  
colorless or milky  
tumbling along  
the road side's edge.

Tires passing  
fling puffs  
that scatter it  
in whirling motion.

Ballooning  
it dodges cars  
until an 18 wheeler  
tosses it back  
above the highway's shoulder.  
It parachutes  
gently, slowly down  
becoming impaled  
upon a bush's pointed branch.  
Crucifixion without pain.



**(Untitled)**  
**SHELLY CATHCART**  
**SECOND PLACE ~ SHORT STORY**

“Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body...and is itself set on fire by hell.”

NIV, James 3: 5-6

As a child, I know I loved my mother, but I never thought about it. I didn't have to think about it: She was there, a fixture in the universe. We were so interdependent that to think about my love for her would have seemed silly or superficial. She was there, solidly, competently in control, cooking dinner for a family of seven, washing mounds of clothing and sending them up to the appropriate rooms, dusting my father's weird nick-knacks, shooing us out into the yard while she mopped, and shouting after us not to slam the screen door. She combed out our tangles and bandaged our cuts, occasionally tossing a compliment our way, or admiring a school paper. And the glory was when she thought about me, just me, on occasion, and admired some funny thing I said that I didn't know was funny.

There was a magic about her. She instinctively knew when to bring the summer clothes down from the attic, always just in time for the first really warm day of the year. She would make soup on the first really cold day, thick and warm, filling us with the assurance of warmth and satisfaction as the world turned darker, colder, and bare. My mom also had an answer to every question we asked. She shared with us books and music that stretched the borders of our thoughts. She inspired us, she cared for us and she knew pretty much everything.

I don't remember my kindergarten friends, my favorite doll's name, or the trip our family took to the Bahamas that year, but I will always remember the day that my father's small, cold words sparked a fire that still burns. It happened the day my dad joined us on a trip to the grocery store. The grocery was mom's territory. She could calculate the cost per ounce of this spaghetti sauce versus the better brand which was on sale, in an instant. Without a list, usually, she could supply our house with the cereal that everyone would



eat, the right size diapers for little Airianne, and the correct portions of all of our usual meals and all the while be yelling at Katy for pulling Hillary's hair, making one or more of us hold onto the grocery cart for a timeout, and keeping Airianne's two chubby little hands stocked with animal crackers.

We all danced around Dad this time, probably hoping he would give us a quarter for the gum machine. My mom was walking in front of us with the grocery cart, her mind already on Aisle 3. "We don't need bread...always can use peanut butter...pretzels if they're on sale again..." The familiar sight of the back of my mom's curly brown head bounced along purposefully.

My dad said, "Wow, your mother's got a fat ass."

It's a wonder how your feet can keep walking, your eyes looking to the left and the right, when the balance of the universe has been disrupted, sending all of the planets and stars rushing toward you at a violent speed.

I had seen my mom, my sun, my moon, angry. I had seen her cold and uninterested. I had been raging mad at her, wanting to run away, but I had never seen her weak or vulnerable. My eyes were now opened, and there she was, as I was, naked and ashamed. She was no longer the all-knowing impermeable goddess, in control of everything around her. Now she looked weak. Her walk was too fast, her hair was messy in the back, and her skirt was an out-of-date style. As her power, her beauty was stripped from her, so was mine. I was no longer free to think and speak and wonder and play in the freedom that is inherent in childhood. Now I was always there, in front of dad, or people in general, wondering how stupid I sounded and how fat I looked.

We all felt this change, as the secure world of our parents, taken for granted, came apart piece by piece, word by word. One day my younger sister, Hillary, found a baby rabbit that had been abandoned, which was about the size of the palm of her little hand. She put it in a shoe box and guarded it, uncharacteristically crying hysterically, and not letting any of us get close. She held on to that weak, vulnerable little creature as if it were herself, and as if there really were some way to protect it and keep it alive.

My sister Katy, the artist, started dressing like all of her friends. She would wear those eighties-style Belk sweaters with her hair bows and socks in coordinating colors, resenting and rejecting her own naturally weird tendencies. We all hid, and clothed ourselves as best as we could.



The last time I remember crying wholeheartedly was shortly before our parents' divorce. My sisters and I were sitting on the stairs in our hallway listening to my mom's offers of forgiveness and pleas to work things out, and my dad's matter-of-fact voice, blaming mom for his infidelity. We all ran back up to our room, bawling, and angrily blaming each other for the rejection we were experiencing.

Twenty-five years later I still feel it. I still feel it in moments that go too deep, and push at that closed chamber of my heart. I still feel it in moments that threaten intimacy, and my childish, ugly vulnerability begins to surface, until an almost audible voice in my mind shouts, "Leave me alone."

Recently, my mom, my sisters and I had an informal memorial for my aunt who had died, young-ish and unexpectedly. My mom made an elaborate display of photographs. None of them were of my aunt. I said a short prayer, and we all, with relief, commenced distractions. But there was a meaningful moment, an hour or so before the memorial began. My mom played a song for my sisters and me, upstairs on her computer. The singer's voice was raw and shaky as he sang simple words with the discordance of emotion. We all looked away from each other and smoked our cigarettes, hammering back tears with the same familiar force. But there we all were, by some miracle, our defenses lowered for two-and-a-half minutes.

I remember another miraculous moment during a visit with my older sister, Katy. My daughter, Penelope, repeatedly asked me, then her sister, then her cousins to play hide-and-seek with her. She had recently discovered that she could run very fast, and was eager to show everyone—to no avail. Then I saw Katy, who is obsessed with her appearance, in her three-inch platform shoes and mini-skirt crouching unattractively in the middle of a bush, "hiding." And with real effort she clomped clumsily, slipping on pine straw, to tag my daughter before she reached Base. In that moment, silly looking and vulnerable, Katy was just caring about Penelope.

Moment by moment I can feel the flames lessening in my own heart. For the longest time, I could never cry. Although it still burns, the communion of intimacy with my husband and friends transcends my childhood hurt. Now I have a tear-duct problem, so that every time I laugh or even smile really big, tears spill over. It's very embarrassing. I hear my dad's voice in my mind, telling me I look like the over-eager dork who is so grateful to be spoken to and liked that she just cannot hold in her lame joy. ■





**NANCY MINARD**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**

## Metaphor/Simile Poem

BECCA DAVIS

Halloween

Ghosts and goblins

Witches and wizards

Candy and Pumpkins

Halloween is a Christmas of candy

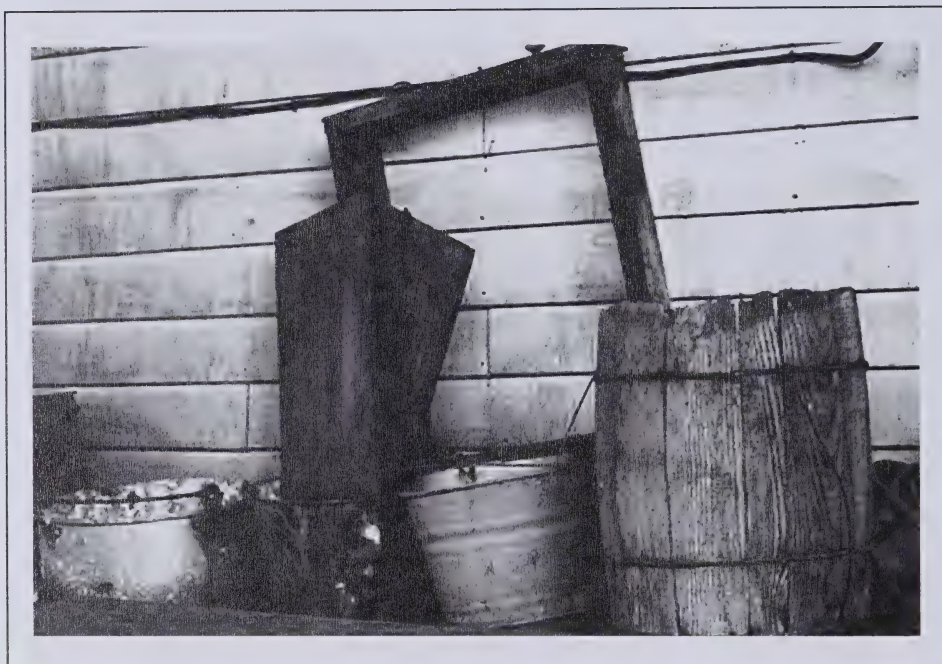




**SARAH JOHNSON**

**PENCIL DRAWING**





**KRISTI CUNNINGHAM**

**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## Mining God's Country

JONAH JURSS

where faint reflections float in dust  
and catch lost light in scant amounts  
for always... industry's backbone  
has hunched, until its choked lungs bust.

above, the metal giants churn  
and spew the blue ridge mountains black.  
they stand and stagger in the clouds,  
brought down in seconds — beauty burns.

see heaven flattened on earth: this strikes  
selective memory into  
petition. workers stab the sky,  
scabs showing up off the turnpikes.

once cloaked in life, reduced peaks tell —  
a miner's front line, creations's hell.



**(Untitled)****NIKKI CROWE**

Neat

Mind-able

Calm

Irreplaceable

Acceptable

Rich

Cool

Realistic

Over-and-over

Opal

Lovable

Wizard

Laughable

Enchanting

Empress

Excellent

Never-ending

Talk-able

All-about-me

Trustworthy

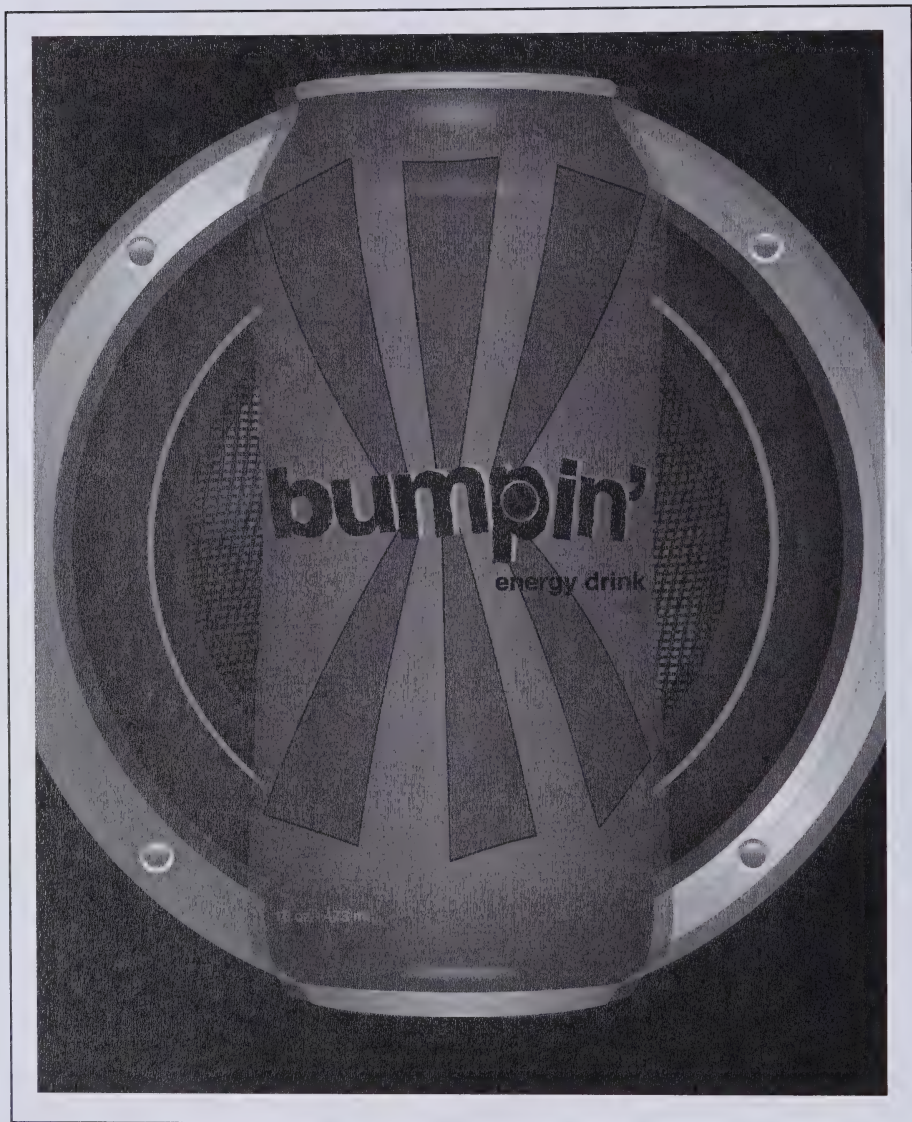
Extravagant





**JACOB SUTTON**  
**COMPUTER ILLUSTRATION**





**NICOLE TONER**  
**COMPUTER ILLUSTRATION**



## Semi Truck

MARTHA TREE THOMAS

Semi truck  
       Stuck  
 In this tiny town  
       Up behind the First Baptist.

Semi truck headin' the  
       WRONG WAY DOWN  
 A one-way street.  
 Downtown Sylva  
 Courthouse looms above  
 The crowd.

"But I'm BIG" he sez.  
 "Y'all jest move on over thar  
 Little box cars in MY WAY.

Semi truck headin'  
 The WRONG WAY DOWN  
 A one-way street.



## Electric Corn Shellers

GARY CARDEN

I remember a warm afternoon in August 1949 when the county agent came to our house with an electric corn sheller. It was a demonstration model and had been a big hit at several large farms in the county. When the agent plugged it in, it hummed like a bee hive and smelled of hot oil and scorched corn cobs. The agent made a big thing out of shucking an ear of corn and holding it over the big slot in the top of the sheller. My grandfather stared at the contraption the same way he observed most “marvels of the future”—with distrust and fascination—the same way he looked at snakes and rabid groundhogs.

“Are you ready, Arthur?” My grandfather grunted and the agent dropped the big ear of yellow corn into the slot. “Zzzzit!” said the sheller and deposited a double handful of corn in the tin bucket beneath the sheller. The cob shot out the side and ricocheted off the wall of the corn crib, thereby confirming my grandfather’s opinion that the sheller was probably dangerous. However, I was impressed. The agent shucked a dozen ears and dropped them in the slot. “Zzzzit, zzzit, zzzit, zzzit!” said the sheller until the bucket brimmed with yellow corn. I picked up the hot cobs like they were the hulls of shotgun shells.

“Now, you can shell in one afternoon what it would take you a week to shell with... that!” He pointed contemptuously at our hand-cranked sheller in the corner. “How many Corn Zappers do you want?”

My grand-daddy pulled the plug out of the wall, and the big hummer hushed. “I don’t want one,” he said.

The agent gawked. “Why not?”

“Cause that was the way my daddy done it,” he said, pointing at the old sheller, “and that’s the way I’ll do it. Either that, or by hand.”

I was not pleased by my grandfather’s decision since I had spent untold afternoons and was now doomed to spend many more with that hand-cranked sheller, my arms aching and my fingertips numb and bloody from shucking. The



agent shook his head as he carefully loaded the sheller in his car like it was a prize stud bulldog.

"You are fighting the future, Arthur," he said. "It just makes good common sense to take advantage of things like this."

"Maybe so, but there is something unnatural about all these 'lectric gadgets," he said, peering at the Zapper with distaste. "I don't like it."

As we watched the county agent's car vanish in a cloud of dust down the Rhodes Cove road, Arthur Carden shook his head and delivered his judgment on time past and time to come: "Things have been bad, and they are gonna get worse." That is what he would say when our dusty trail became a paved road and his own children insisted on getting a telephone. (He once tore the telephone off the wall and threw it into the cornfield because it rang constantly while we were eating supper.) He reluctantly accepted indoor plumbing but refused to drink city water. ("It ain't healthy to drink water that has been standing in iron pipes.") The most marked exception to his rejection was the big Silvertone radio. As soon as it produced Bill Monroe singing "Blue Moon of Kentucky," it was given a corner of the living room where it squatted like a household god, delivering music (The Grand Ole Opry) and prophecies (Grady Cole's Farm News).

Oddly enough, I seem to have inherited my grandfather's contradictory attitude about technology. While I nurture a cautious appreciation for television, stereos and computers, I am extremely suspicious of anything that alters my environment or makes radical changes in my accepted mode of living. I especially resent being compelled to change. Living in my grandparents' old house, I sometimes feel that I am under siege by aspects of progress that are either unwanted or deceptive. Several years ago my grandfather's spring had to be abandoned when tests indicated that it was contaminated. Now, I have city water that probably stands in plastic pipes and a telephone that rings incessantly due to





a host of “marketing specialists” in distant cities who call at inopportune times. My doctor tells me that my persistent cough is largely due to air pollution. (Right here in Rhodes Cove, folks!) And when I look from my porch at the Balsam Mountains, I am distracted by the grid-locked traffic on the Cullowhee road. A decade ago, I learned that I now live in the city limits (if I think of an advantage to this new status, I’ll let you know!), and street lights have spread like malignant fireflies to the top of the ridge. At night, despite my deafness, I hear a constant medley of boom boxes, rap music and stripped gears. Rhodes Cove was once quiet (except for mournful hounds), peaceful and very dark. Now, the new, all-night convenience store over on the highway hovers in the dark like the mother ship in *Encounters of the Third Kind* and ambulances and highway patrol cars speed up and down the Cullowhee road with flashing lights and wailing sirens. Progress.

When “progress” would get to my grandfather, he used to talk about moving to “the Cove.” He owned an isolated piece of land in Macon County, which, he assured me, was so far back, he would never hear another car horn, stripped gear or telephone. “Nothing but wind, night critters and running water,” he used to say. He took me to see it once, and we flushed quail and pheasant, fished and listened to whippoorwills. He didn’t get to go there when he retired, of course (he didn’t retire), and I’m told that it now has a paved road and a dozen retirement homes, street lights and a security patrol. Progress.

All of this makes me think of a passage in the play, *Inherit the Wind*. Henry Drummond (Clarence Darrow) makes a comment on technology in which he envisions a little man in an office someplace who is in charge of “Progress.” You tell him the marvelous advantage that you want (flight, international communications, entertainment), and he tells you what you will have to sacrifice in order to have it. “You may have world travel in futuristic air ships,” he says, “but the birds will lose their wonder and the clouds will smell of gasoline.” He notes that you may have communication devices that will allow you to talk to foreign countries or distant planets, but “you must sacrifice forever the wonderful world of privacy.”

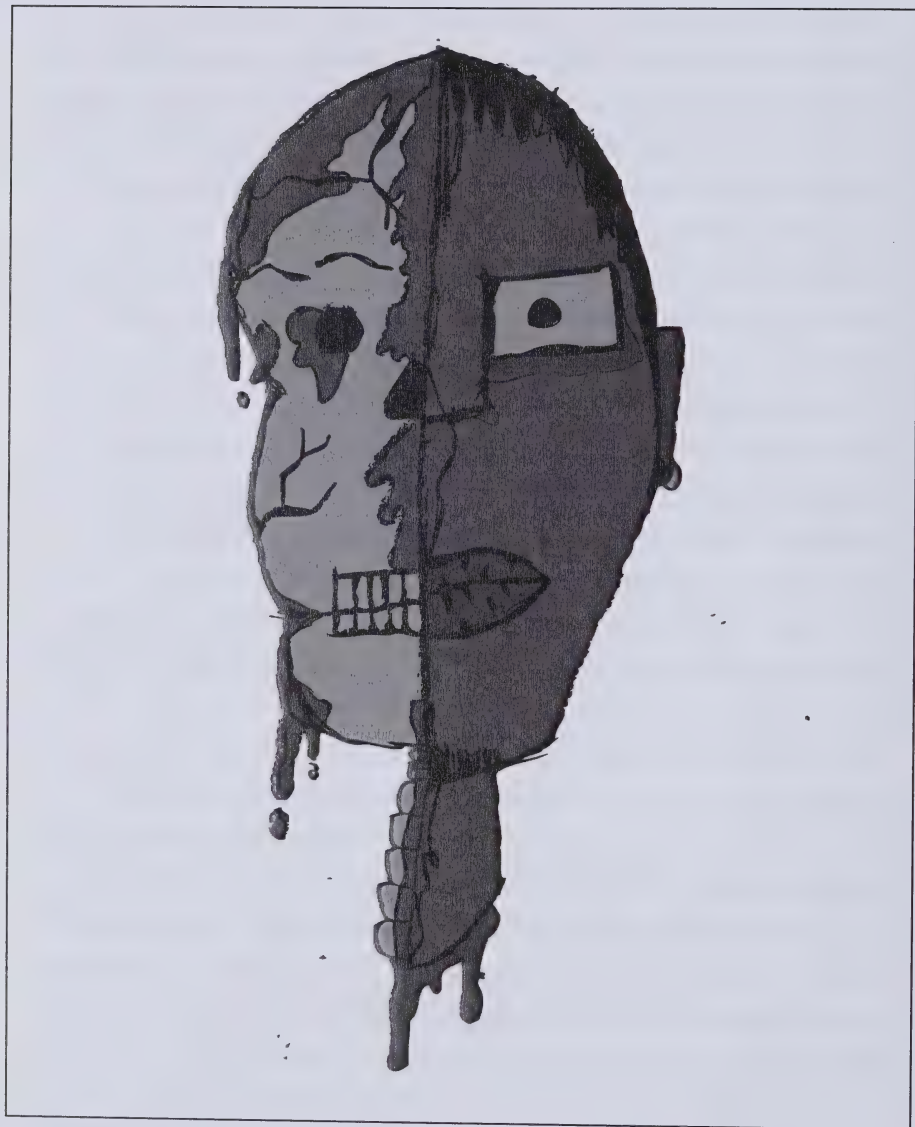


What is the answer, then, for people like me who grudgingly accept the benefits of technology and bitterly resent aspects of progress that are thrust on me without my consent? I have heard a few learned experts who advised the bewildered public to “readily accept innovation that is beneficial and reject that which is harmful.” Such profound conclusions are meaningless. How do you tell the difference? Sugar substitutes end up poisoning us, computers purvey pornography, and some “genetically enhanced” grain are harmful to both cattle and humans. Small wonder that my grandfather was skeptical of electric corn shellers!

A few years ago, a prosperous fellow invited me to dinner in his home—one of those \$250,000 “log cabins.” The house was full of furniture and objects from the Appalachian past: pie safes, a cider press, hand-carved furniture, wooden shoe lasts and coffee mills. At one point, he invited me into another room to see “something that his grandfather gave him.” He pointed reverently to it on the wall, mounted like a trophy deer. A corn sheller. “My grandfather actually used it,” he said. I told him that I used one, too. He looked at me skeptically. “You can’t be that old,” he said.

Maybe I am an artifact, too. Maybe I should be preserved in formaldehyde and kept in a room lit by beeswax candles with a tasteful plaque under my embalmed husk that says something like, “Extinct life form that once inhabited an undeveloped portion of Rhodes Cove.” Perhaps tasteful music could whisper from hidden speakers—perhaps “Blue Moon of Kentucky.” Perhaps I could have my own recorded message that could be activated by pressing a button – a message that says in a pronounced mountain twang, “Things have been bad, and they are going to get worse.” ■





**ALEX CRUZ**  
**COMPUTER ILLUSTRATION**



## Black, white, and both

DAVE WALDROP

It is interesting to listen to people refer to Americans as black or white. It is easy to pretend that our racial makeup as a country is that simple. But it simply isn't true. When our ancestors began bringing Africans into this country around 1619 to become slaves, many male slave owners sired children by slave women, almost always without their consent. The children of these complicated relationships were half white. This practice of siring children with unwilling sexual partners may have had some social embarrassment attached to it, but there was no law designed to provide for individual rights of African women. Thus, these relationships continued over the course of many decades. Even from the early days of our history, occasionally a black man and a white woman had a child together.

Family trees were seldom kept. Those that were kept conveniently (typically) left out any connection between slave owners and slaves and their offspring. Sadly, the result is that there are few genealogical or legal records to reflect how black and white people have become forever related by blood. However, the absence of records does not change the fact that most of us are related to people of the other race. What is odd to me is that many people still choose to separate themselves racially and remain prejudicial as though there really are two un-connected races.

In recent years the families of President Thomas Jefferson and South Carolina Senator Strom Thurman have had to face up to their blood kinship to African-Americans. Would it not be much more humane, responsible and even wiser to embrace our blood kinship now and begin developing actual genealogies that link us than to ignore the facts until later? The Bible (John 8:32) says, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." If the truth makes us free, what does a lie make us?

Now in the year 2008 the Democratic Party nominee for President of the United States is Barack Obama, a child of a Kenyan man and a white American woman from Kansas. He is generally referred to as a black man, but, in reality, he is not black. Neither is he white. He is both. But, most importantly, he is an American.

Maybe Barack Obama, with his high-profile image in the world, will serve as a reminder of our common racial ancestry in America. Maybe we will see beyond the color of peoples' skin and look into their hearts and souls as Dr. Martin Luther King wanted us to, and as we should.

If we choose to look backward, we are linked to Barack Obama. If we choose to look forward, we are linked to Barack Obama. It is time for all Americans to face these facts. Let's come together as brothers and sisters—black, white and both. ■







**BRENDA CLARK**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## A Mother's Dilemma

JESSICA BONIFACE

I clutch silence to my bosom  
Holding fast in desperate knowledge  
That when the now elusive quiet  
Surrounds me like a coffin  
I will long for the clamor





**MISTY LACKEY**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## Helen

CARLYN M. CORBIN

There was a floor of black earth and thick walls of dried mud. The intense African sun pierced through the doorway as our eyes adjusted to the darkness inside. She sat across from us, on a faded, thoroughly worn-out couch that sagged until it was only a couple of inches off the ground. Ancient yellow foam poked out from the threadbare fabric covering. The putrid stench of human sweat and excretion was suddenly overwhelmed by the light breeze that entered through the doorway. I inhaled with a prayer of gratefulness. Maybe this wouldn't take too long.

We counted them. Little brown pills, round white ones, long red capsules. Yes, they were all there.

She took them with a brief nod, grimly smiling her approval.

"Helen weaves baskets," we were told, and we politely bought two. Forty shillings each.

She was going to kill us a chicken, and I shuddered at the thought. The loud, gawking animals sputtered in and out of the house, some lean and others just starved. They ate from the piles of rotting garbage strewn about the landscape. *Do not kill one of them for us*, I thought to myself. There would never be a time when I could be hungry enough to eat such a rancid piece of meat cooked in such conditions.

So she gave us some melons. Fruit from her garden, I guess. I did not ask.





Outside again, I welcomed the extreme heat that seemed to dehydrate my body in seconds. Although it was steaming, at least it was fresh air. She walked with us, and I noticed the bony elbows and ankles that protruded from her homemade dress. Her frame was frail, nearly decimated. But she had her pills, thanks to us, and they would help make her strong again.

She told us they would make her strong again.

"Goodbye," we said, and I held my breath as I hugged her lightly. Momentarily feeling her body against mine made me tremble inside. There just wasn't much of her.

She waved and called out after us until we were nearly out of sight. Next time you come, I will kill you a chicken, I think is what she said.

Drenching my hands with sanitizer, I wondered just one thing. Why me?

Helen had AIDS. She would not get strong again. She would not even live very much longer. The pills would help her system fight the symptoms of the disease for a short time, but they would not heal her.

She had contracted it from her husband. When he learned of her positive-HIV status, he abandoned her. But he had several wives, each with her own house. So he allowed Helen to stay on the land he had provided, but he refused to support her or the children he had with her.

And so Helen and her children existed on what money she made weaving baskets with dyed ropes made from straw. And she raised chickens and sold the eggs to other families in their rural community.

The chickens. Her source of livelihood—that is what she was going to kill for us to eat.

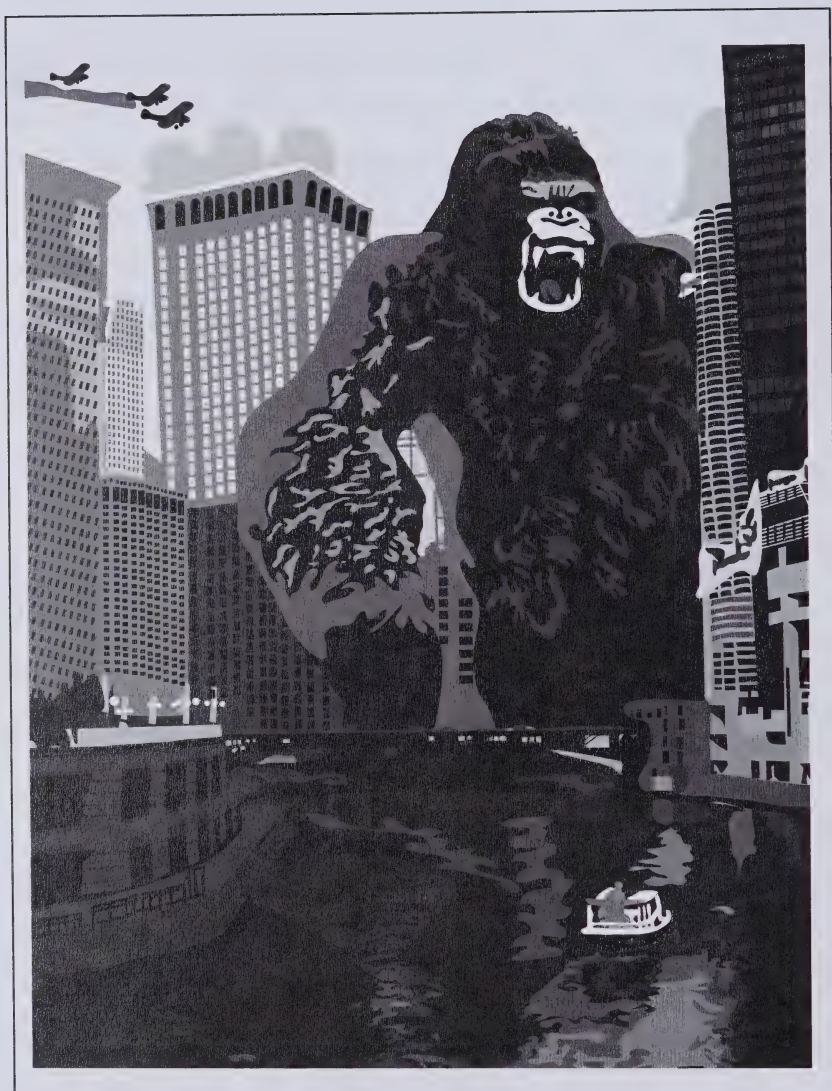


I was amazed that someone with so little could have so much to give. But that was just it—she considered herself blessed beyond measure, and loved beyond belief. She was alive, and she was going to thank Jesus for every day that she breathed.

And so I asked myself, why me? Why am I the one with issues of self-pity and pathetic neediness? Why am I absorbed in my massive list of wants and desires? Why do I never have enough money to give something to a stranger in need? Why do I ignore the thirstiness of my soul, parched from the brutal scorching of materialism and toys?

Helen is most likely gone now. I don't pretend to understand the injustice she suffered. But Mercy was awaiting her just above the clouds. ■





**KRISTI CUNNINGHAM**  
**COMPUTER ILLUSTRATION**



# My Fat Is Fit

BETTY HOLT

My fat is fit  
It loves to ride a bike  
Goes for walks around the block  
Does yoga, runs, and hikes

My fat's this fit:  
Climbs mountains, goes to Curves  
Proudly holds my posture firm  
Gets nods that it deserves

My fat is fit  
Even though my shape is round  
Every time I touch it  
It makes a solid sound

My fat's so fit  
It looks good in my clothes  
Takes less space than it did before  
But it's still called adipose

My fat is just so fit  
Every last pound of it  
From my chin down to my belly  
'Cause I rarely ever sit

Let's just call it fit fat  
Has a better ring than plump  
Better to blend in with muscle  
Than resemble a flaccid clump

My fat is really fit  
The fittest fat I know  
No matter where I travel  
My fat will surely go

I guess it's just so fitting  
That I am still so fat  
Even though I exercise  
What I still don't have down pat

Is all the stuff goes in my mouth  
The stuff that they call food  
You just can't outrun calories  
They show up clothed or nude





## It Could Only Happen to Me

ALISHA LONG

On one Monday night, my father came to our house. My parents were divorced and my sister and I lived with my mother. He never came into the house unless there was something wrong. I was unaware what to expect from his visit that night. I never thought it would be something like this. When you just turned seventeen a few days earlier and your sister is almost fifteen, you don't expect to hear those horrid words coming from your father's mouth.

"I have something to tell you girls; it has been killing me, keeping this from you all this time," he said.

My mind was racing and going a thousand different ways in a matter of seconds. I was thinking, "What did I do? Who died? Am I in trouble? I haven't done anything wrong." I looked up at my sister, who looked as shocked and confused as I was. The whole room seemed quiet and everything stood still. My mother was also in the room with us. My dad's face was streaming with tears. I kept thinking about what I had done to upset him this badly, yet I couldn't think of anything I had done wrong in forever. The last time he was mad at me was two years ago ... for trying a cigarette ... and even then he wasn't crying and this upset.

He finally spoke again, stating how much he loves my sister and me, and how he didn't mean for this to happen. I am so confused it doesn't really register quickly. "What is he talking about?" I wondered.

Then he said it. "You're going to have a little brother or sister soon."

My whole mind crashed like a head-on collision. I couldn't speak, blink, or hear. This didn't make sense to me. For one, he had not even gotten remarried, and he told me that he wasn't dating her; they were "just friends." All I could think is, "This would only happen to me." I felt as if I were being replaced, because I would be leaving for college in about two or so years. It didn't seem fair.

Tears started streaming down my face, and then all of a sudden, I thought of my sister. Did she feel as bad as me? I looked up and she was crying also. We sat there in silence; it seemed as if it were forever. My mother kept asking if we were



okay with it. How can you be okay with it? It's not like you can change what has happened or make it go away. Everyone was crying except for my mother; she thought it was a great thing and couldn't wait for the baby to arrive so she could baby-sit.

I thought back to my childhood days; he wasn't always there for my sister or me. It didn't seem fair. I was filled with anger and could not stop the tears from flowing. At the same time, I realized that my father had done some growing up from back then, and he would be there for that baby. He had tried to make up for all the lost time he missed with us. That should count for something, right? However, I still couldn't comprehend what had just happened; it seemed unreal, like a bad dream.

I admit I am a very spoiled girl; I always have been and always will be. I finally got enough courage to speak and be heard. "I'm okay with it," I said with my shaky voice.

I still thought it was unfair, but you can't stop this from happening or make it go away, no matter how hard you think it. I had to be the adult and accept what had happened and go on from there. I thought it could be a good thing. I might change my mind when the baby arrives, but, for now, it's good. The woman is nice and treats my sister and me with respect, unlike my father's ex-girlfriends. I think she deserves to be happy; she wasn't expected to be able to have children of her own. I know she won't take my father away from us. There's enough of him to go around. This is a blessing for her.

The time is getting closer and closer, and I have had long conversations with my father. I made him assure me that he would always love me more and would never, ever forget about me. How could he? I have been in his life for a little over seventeen years, and I haven't let him forget it since. I know he will be a great father for the new baby; like he has been for my sister and me. ■





**AIMEE ALICH**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## Solitary

**SHEYENNE BERNDT**

In the middle of a field  
A single tree stands  
Tall, straight and strong  
With no one to impress  
Limbs so wide  
They grab at the sky  
The shade from the leaves  
Wait for the day  
When it will no longer be  
Solitary







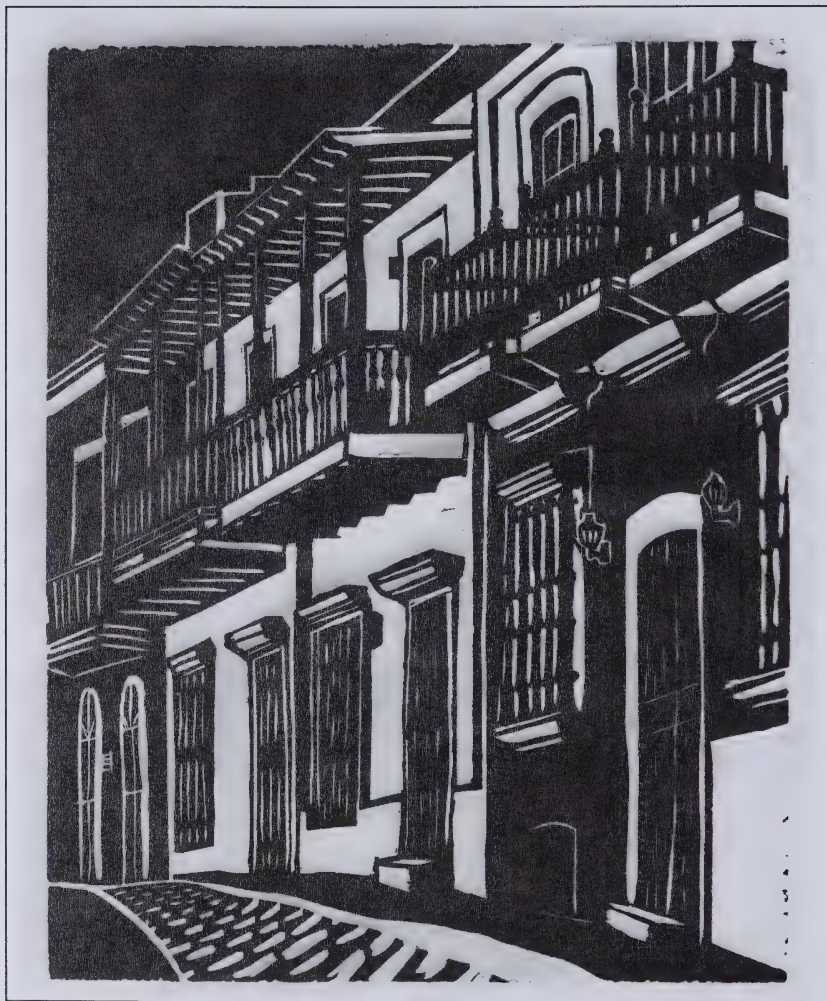
**SARAH JOHNSON**  
**PEN AND INK ILLUSTRATION**





**JACOB SUTTON**  
**COMPUTER ILLUSTRATION**





**BRENDA CLARK**  
**WOOD CUT ILLUSTRATION**







In the end  
     it was cancer,  
                     not his heart,  
     that was his final operation  
 he spent three weeks in the hospital  
     with his throat cut  
             to remove the cancer, and  
                     a twelve-inch incision  
                             to move the stomach up  
                                     to reattach

Days in intensive care  
     days without water  
             so the stitches would take  
 he cried once  
     when an intern said he could have a drink  
             but the doctor reconsidered  
                     phoned and said no  
                             as I brought the glass to him  
 I think he cried then  
     just to taste his own tears

When he got home  
     weeks of radiation  
             each time coming home smiling  
     counting down the time  
     till it was over

he never was able to eat again  
     we spent the next Thanksgiving in the hospital  
             when they placed a tube in his stomach  
                     to feed him

Later, one morning,  
     the skin died and fell off a foot  
             as the circulation waned  
     they took off the toes  
     he never spoke of it

the cancer returned  
     more weeks in the hospital  
 he went into cardiac arrest one  
     they revived him  
 no one ever had to tell him  
     "do not go gentle into that good night"



When they told us the cancer was back  
 We were in a hospital three hours from home  
 all Mother and I said was  
     "we need to get him home"  
         home—home to another hospital  
         but home to family

They put a tube in his throat to breathe  
 it hurt to talk  
     the doctor told him he had five words  
         to say before his medication  
     to Mother: "I love you"  
         the doctor: "you've got two more"  
     "very much"

The family stayed with him  
     night after night,  
         week by week  
 An uncle, a cousin,  
     coming in at midnight  
         another at four in the morning  
 He'd been alone at 13  
     but not now

The last night  
     we circled the bed  
         in the final few minutes  
 the heart,  
     the one all the doctors said would just stop,  
     kept beating  
         beating  
             slower and slower  
         but beating still  
     he went like in a deep sleep

If he cried alone  
     I've never known  
 still, even now,  
     I don't understand  
         but I can't deny  
         Job's tears



## Peanut Butter and Sugar

STARR MARTIN

On May 1 (May Day), 1998, my boyfriend and I decided to take our relationship to the next step, the ultimate step: Marriage! It only took fifteen minutes to get through with the ceremony, but the words and the vows my new husband and I had taken would be with us for a lifetime. At the time, I don't think either of us knew what we were getting into; we were just scared to death of losing each other. I've told T.J. that I love him every day since the first day that we met, but, in hindsight, I didn't know what love truly meant.

Some days I wake up with a revelation of just how much we love each other and how very important that love is. One of the most important reasons I got married was so that I would always have someone in my corner no matter what the consequences; I knew that he would always be beside me. Sometimes in life it feels like the whole world is against me, but as long as T.J. is beside me, I know we can do anything. You have to be totally devoted to your spouse; anything else just isn't enough. We complement each other; we're like two halves of a whole.

I believe love is like a house that you have to build. Our foundation is trust and honesty; without these our love would sink in the mud. After all these years, he never ceases to amaze me. He loves me when I can't love myself. His beliefs in me are unshakable, and that is one of the most comforting and reassuring feelings I've ever known. We are learning to respect each other for our differences; basically, we've learned to agree to disagree. (It is not always easy.) It is crazy how I love his flaws. He actually dips his spoon full of peanut butter into the sugar canister, and he wears flip-flops to dinner. The things that used to drive me crazy about him are the things I cherish now.

When I was a little girl, I had a fantasy about a guy that I dreamed up. Thank God for unanswered prayer! You don't always get what you want or what you expect, but God's plan is always best.

Love is blind because sometimes you can love someone so unconditionally that you would defend him to the end. Love endures, even when he is wrong. Love can be all consuming. Love can be scary when you're terrified of losing that person, on any level,



Milestone

but, on the other hand, love is wondrously beautiful. When I think of two people in love, making a baby, I can't imagine anything more beautiful or fulfilling.

My husband is the worst drug I've ever been on. The highs are high and the lows are low, but in the end it's all worth it, to look into those beautiful blue eyes and know that he's unquestionably all mine. At twenty-three years old, I have finally learned what love is and is not. Love is not total dependence. It's not having someone to vent on just because he loves you too much to stop you, and it is not being able to push buttons. Love is not always convenient or magical. It can be boring and mundane, but when you're in love, everyone knows it because they can see it in your eyes, and they can feel it coming off you like a warm glow.

Love is... sharing the bathroom, listening to snoring all night long, listening to nonsense, and enduring your mother-in-law. Love is... sleeping with knees and elbows, calling me beautiful at six o'clock in the morning, running my bath after a terrible day and giving more than you receive. Love is... helping around the house and with our daughters after building houses all day, putting me through school and always being supportive. Love is better than chocolate and even better than ice cream! Love is flowers for no reason, love letters in my homework, and putting my brakes on in the cold until one o'clock in the morning. Love is... staying by a hospital bed night and day, holding your hair back while you are getting sick, and wanting each other after a decade.

Love is... having a partner in crime, having a whip-cream fight, and sharing our children's childhoods. It is nurturing and enduring. Love is... always having someone to hold, the feel and smell of your breath on my face while we sleep tangled in each other's bodies. Love is... never knowing when enough is enough. (You will go to any lengths to prove your love.) Love is... stable when your whole world is upside down; it is him coming home to me every day, smelling all manly. Love is not having any idea what is wrong, only how desperately I need a hug. It is my engagement ring in a bottle, surprise!

Love is... worrying and believing in each other; it is noticing and treasuring the small stuff, those precious moments when nothing goes as planned and you get a little insight into your lover. It is always knowing that we are living in the "good old days" right now. Love is compromising on peanut butter in the sugar canister! ■







**ANDREA MINARD**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



# A Beatnik Wanders into Appalachia And Learns the Language of the Earth and Sky

THOMAS RAIN CROWE

Climbing cold streams' wet weave of root  
& rock    a warm murmur breathes beneath  
a pool of song where water and wilt shine  
on green tendrils moist with deep moss  
and dew.

Dig the dance of vine  
climbing circle of stone.

Dig the blue bloom of rose  
cut to caress torrents of rotting soil.

Dig the ripe wave of evening that touches flame  
& breaks blood's slow boil of mulch & rain.

Walking green trees' coppered limbs of stairs  
& canopy    a thrush of whistles rises in  
a swoon of sunlight when thunder slaps and  
color arcs in clouds' turbid mood of limber logs  
and leaves.

Dig the skiff of snow that preeks soft  
near the rabbit's lair.

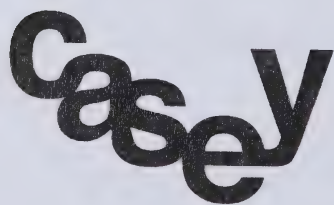
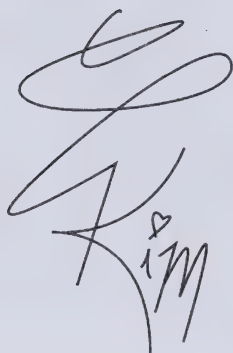
Dig the Big Eyed Bird in swag or hollow  
of locust and locked wood.

Dig the heave of new ground and the golden comb  
of honey with winter rye.

Dig the dogtick and the rowan tree.

Dig the sky!





**SCC GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDENTS**  
**LOGO DESIGN**





## SCC GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDENTS LOGO DESIGN





# for james, a long time ago (we are now together)

EMILY ELDERS

If I had you for a lifetime  
I would savor words you said;  
each time *guitar, lover, kiss*  
rolled from your lips I would  
close my eyes and ravage the sound.  
it's quietly surprising:  
with you I see, not passion alone,  
not potential alone,  
but a mutual unity that sparkles  
only in the light we make together.

when you are not with me  
there are many moments when I do not think of you at all.  
but then there are these secret sideways  
hallways  
that open up in the middle of everything else  
and when I see you standing there  
I laugh with the pure pleasure of sight.  
for once, the darkness within me  
hides not pain but purity;  
for the ability to recognize that miracle,  
I am grateful.  
not to you, but to the forces of time and chance and space  
which brought me to here  
and you to there  
and us to a random moment.

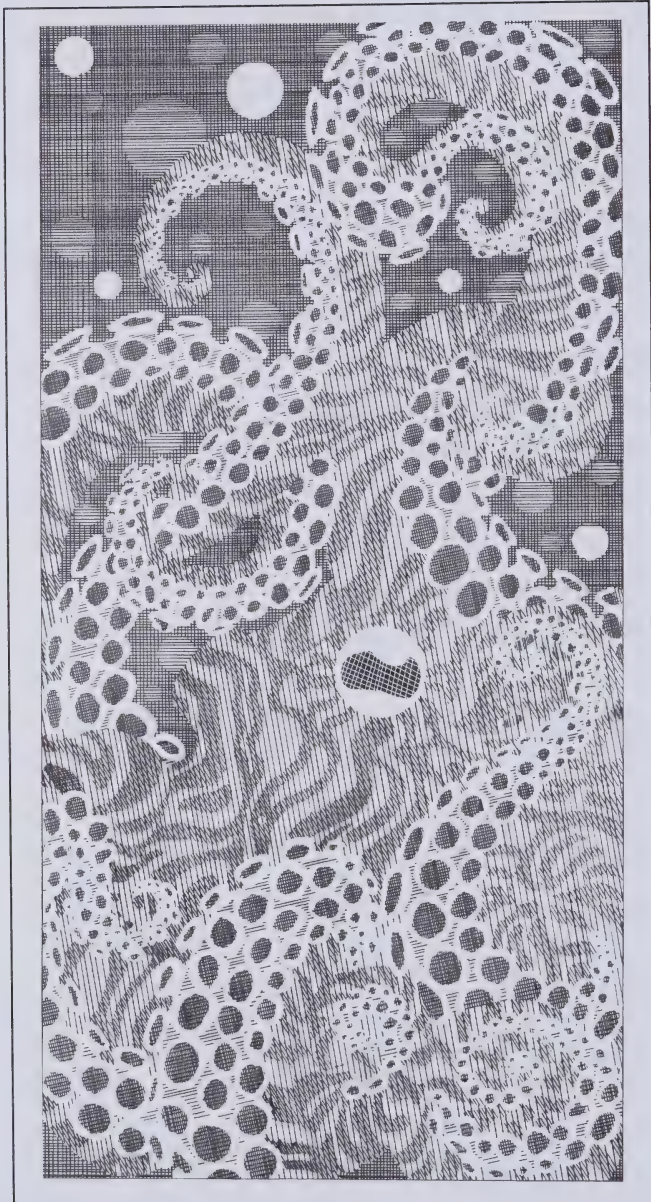


Milestone

don't you see, I asked you  
(today in my head, where we have long conversation)  
there's so much in our way, which is  
such an impossible and long way to begin with:  
the beginning of it all is, by itself,  
a defeat which is also a glorious victory.  
if nothing else there is faith to be found in this.  
If I had you for a lifetime,  
I would love your every movement.  
I would love you crying, screaming, bleeding;  
I would love you long, and well.

there is something to be said for life,  
(our lives)  
which we hold up like fencing swords  
where they clash and spark—  
but there is something to be said for my heart,  
and it is that  
I would take you for a lifetime, if I were ever going to have you at all.





**MAXINE GERBER**  
**PEN AND INK ILLUSTRATION**



## Poem: Red Morning

MISTY LACKEY

Butterfly wings stitched the  
cotton's sun.  
Cactus flowers and  
eyes bloomed from  
a rose captive to  
prevail the speed of  
light.

Fabrics mending art.  
The handles syruping  
bubblegum's tooth.  
Residing anguish the  
earth's setting sun awaits  
our faith.

She wants to be your  
bird with broken wings.  
The sky's blood red mother  
cried windy rain.  
Vig stars.  
Moon's shadow  
vacations alone  
without a blanket.  
Vibrant discovery  
innocent and cared.  
The best soul always  
sleeps.  
Time is angry completely  
numb.  
Winter's calling.

Free as a bird I am  
dreaming.  
Trees played dead  
restless and unchanged  
beneath the grass no  
rest for the weary.

Hang curtains wet like  
your soul.  
Bitter and afraid love  
strangled moving flowers  
alone unspoken.  
Crying, suffocating,  
trying.  
Blinded by sigh.





## Stickball

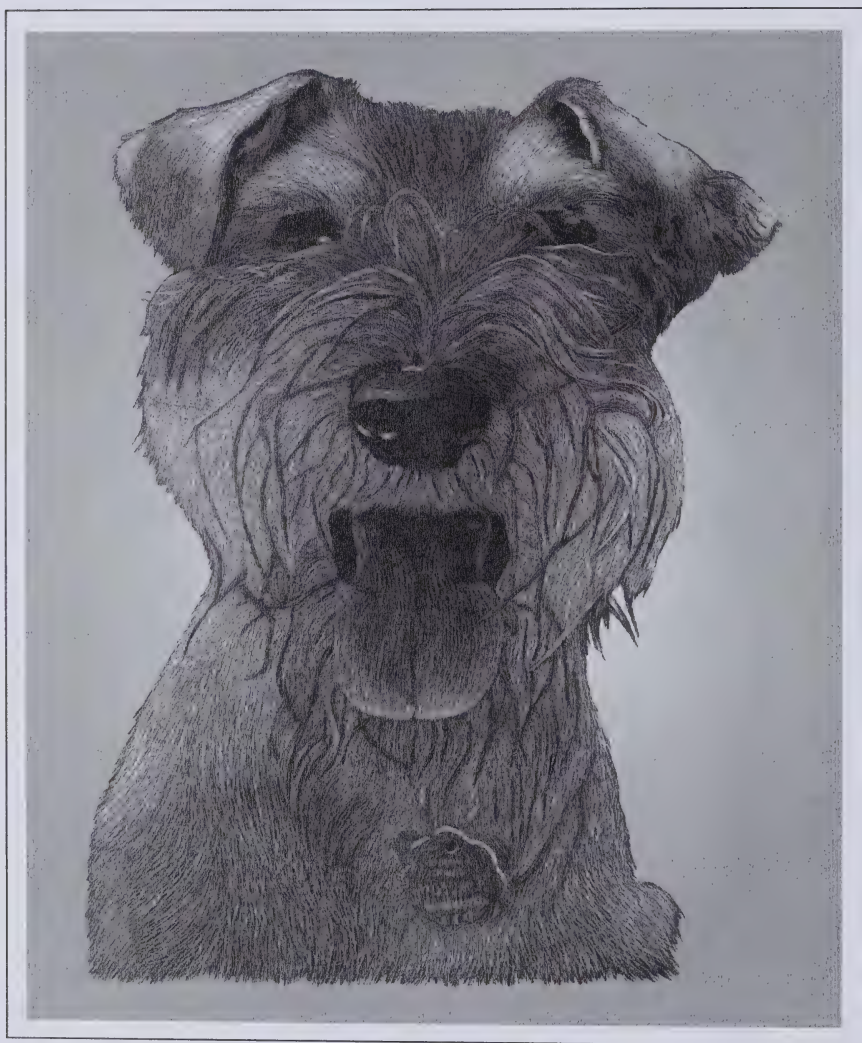
JOSEPH LEE ARCH

Stickball with its roughness,  
Player's skin getting cut from the grass  
Small ball getting picked up in sticks  
With cups on one end,  
Getting carried between small trees  
Seven paces apart on each end of the field  
In one player's hand,  
To show that he is man enough  
To do this task while also being trailed,  
By another player not on his team,  
Trying to stop him by tackling him  
So he can get his hand to steal the ball.





**CASEY DAVIS**  
**PENCIL DRAWING**



**DEANNA WAGNER**  
**SCRATCH BOARD ILLUSTRATION**



## Ricochet

GEORGE FRIZZELL

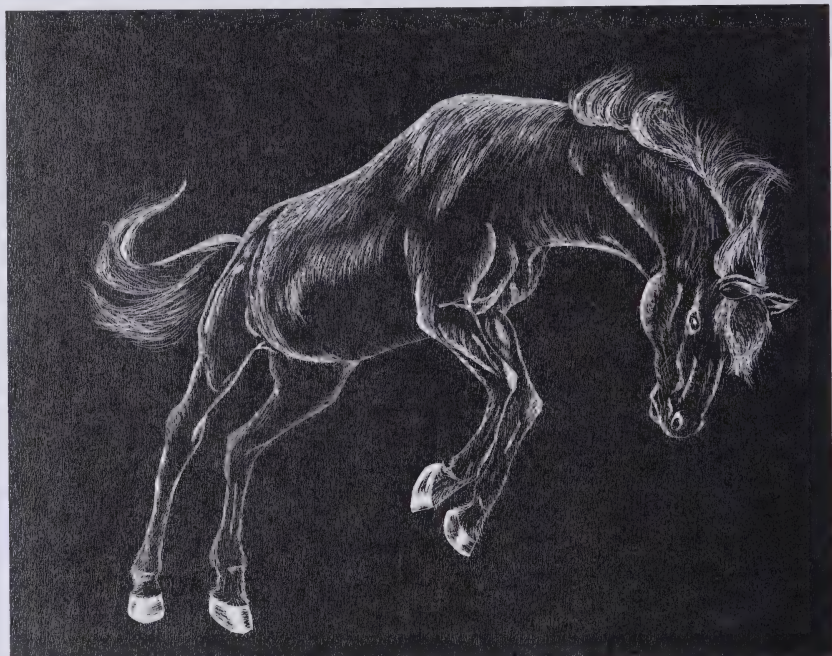
A compliment I thought I made  
bounced off a hidden wound,  
some bit of scar tissue,  
old emotions deep inside.  
It wasn't meant to hurt,  
it was just a ricochet

If everything I have to say  
doesn't always sound quite right,  
don't weigh every single word,  
for sometimes truth is colored gray.  
If you got a heart,  
write it off as a ricochet

The past five minutes  
they've left me wondering  
'bout what I said or did.  
I don't know what you hear in a smile  
a passing nod while she walked on by.  
If you take offense at a life long friend,  
I guess it's just a ricochet







**TRACEY STALCUP**  
**SCRATCH BOARD ILLUSTRATION**



**Moonrise on  
Morgan Farm**  
**MARTHA TREE THOMAS**

Moonrise on Morgan Farm  
Seven sisters high flyin'  
Moonrise on Morgan Farm  
through fir bough she seeks  
through fern frond she peeks  
through rhododendron she creeps,  
    seeking,  
        seeking,  
            seeking,  
solace from the dawn



## Mother on the Stair

**BEN WEATHERSBEE**

The night is cold  
 I creak to the door open as slowly as possible  
 The rooms are silent and dark  
 Softly  
 A sign up on the stair  
 I turn to her  
 Her eyes seek me out of the darkness  
 She holds her own in silence

The candle flame casts light on her face  
 She did not pay the bill again  
 There is a long expanse of silence between these moments  
 the fear is in her eyes again  
 the dancing shadows are hiding in her midst  
 no doubt dancing in her mind as well  
 she is wrapped up in it again  
 she sighs to the ghosts  
 loud  
 and full of regret  
 She stares at me  
 She peels back my mind and tries to understand me  
 The moment is all hers  
 Is she happy to see me?

She speaks my name  
 I hold my breath and listen

The anger in her expression  
 Changes the shape of her face





**ELIZABETH HENRY**

**PENCIL DRAWING**

**Milestone**



**Art & Literature Review 2009**



## The Intruder

JOYCE FOSTER

You waited until we were alone.

I knew you wanted it that way.

And I, too weary to hold you here,

submitted.

Had I known of the Dark Drifter

that would steal into my heart

through the door you left open,

had I known

of the cruelty he would inflict,

how he would strike me with

such uncommon fury that I could

barely breathe,

how my legs could no longer hold me,

nor my eyes see or weep, and my ears

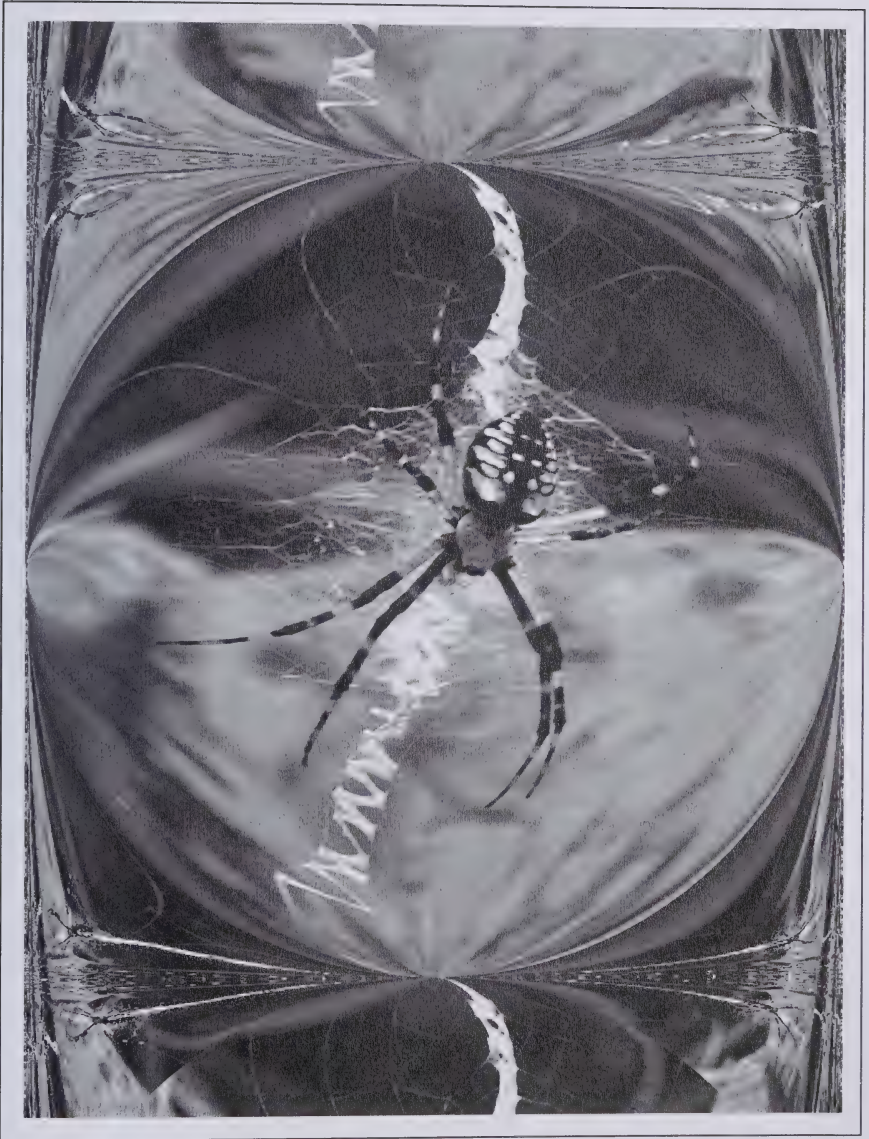
could hear only the screams of

a wild animal,

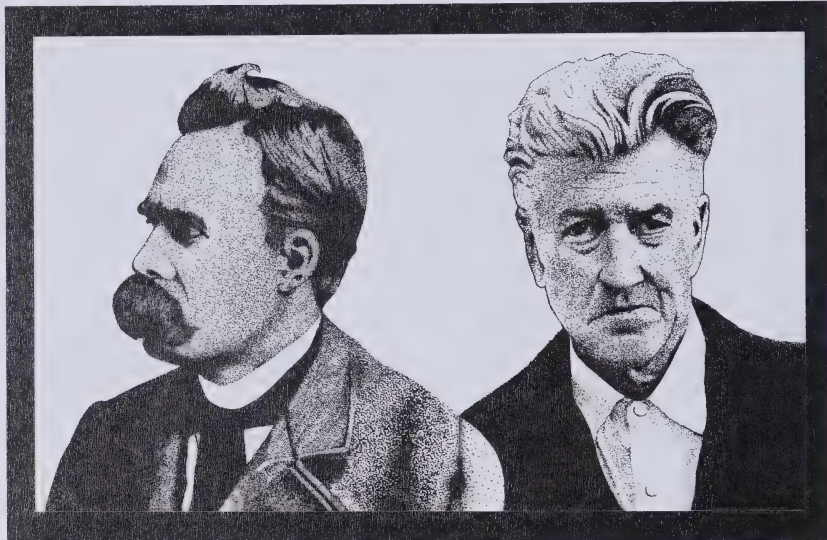
had I known these things, I would

have gone with you.





**MISTY LACKEY**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



**PAUL SLAGLE**  
**STIPPLE ILLUSTRATION**



## America's Dry

PEGGY PARKER

Hungry for apple pie

I am in search for

My country tis to the

Sweet land of apple pie

My mouth is dry

Need a cup of oil

Thanks

Mexican horse meat on a stick

Covered in teriyaki

Couch potato fights like marshmallow

Sticking to my mouth like cotton

In a field my fingers prick

My mouth's like cotton

Need a cup of lead

Thanks China

Will pay you later

In jobs we trust

Banks are poor

Grandpa lost his front porch

Our towers collapse

Into recession





## Un-jihad

Men in dresses sing for me  
Encroaching from all angles  
A bulldozer expanding soil  
For expansion into the sea

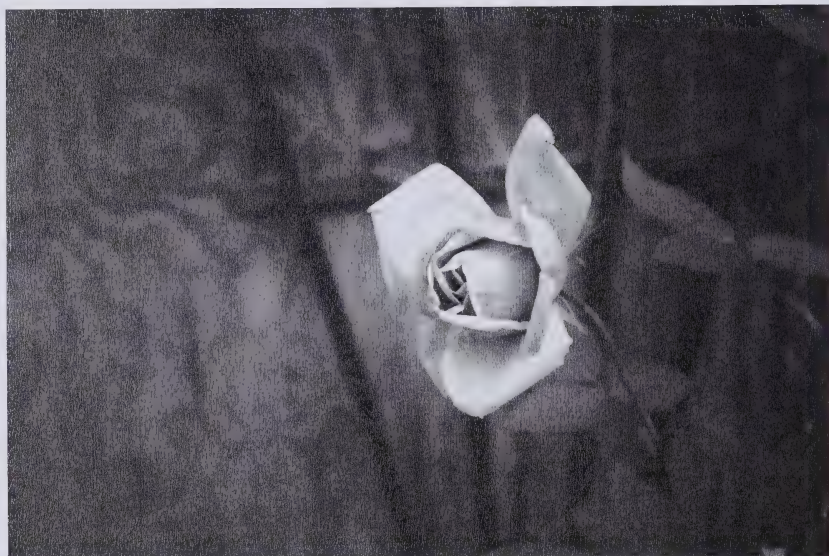
## Faded glory

A brand at Wal-mart  
I will buy my clothes  
Made in the shop  
That sweats the blood  
Of small fingers  
Liberty is shipped to me  
Let freedom ring  
From a welfare line  
Around my neck  
Into this depth  
Of education  
To a career  
Not available  
My heart, my right hand  
Allegiance is taxes  
And a vote  
That is popular



Inside my edition  
Of the celebrity  
That sexes me  
To sell myself  
To a knife  
That can  
Make me beautiful  
Political powers  
Struggle with grammar  
Sticking moist tongues  
In ears  
Licking brains  
Eloquent grasps of syntax  
On teleprompters  
Puppets playing war  
Are short  
A few strings  
A suicide  
Of a thousand martyrs  
Closes its nose  
On the smell  
A rotting empire  
makes





**KRISTI CUNNINGHAM**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## the poet in the walls

EMILY ELDERS

one day I will be  
 a poet of perfect proportions,  
 a veritable virtuoso,  
 a witch of a wordsmith.  
 of course, in a world where  
 a click brings  
 synonyms on demand and instant meaning to your fingertips  
 maybe everyone will one day be a poet.

for right now, I'll keep what magic I can, and save the poetry for later.  
 (my soul is big enough for both but the world outside is deafening.)

most days I am more of a place than a person,  
 the beams on which this home rests, the soil in which we grow.  
 here in a warm place in my heart,  
 I carry those things that make a house a home:  
 knowing where the extra crayons are hidden,  
 how to fix hot chocolate at just the right slurping temperature  
 and how to let a man walk away when he knows he should stay near.

it is a slow and daily lesson,  
 that it is not the love that makes hard work unnecessary  
 but the hard work that makes it love.



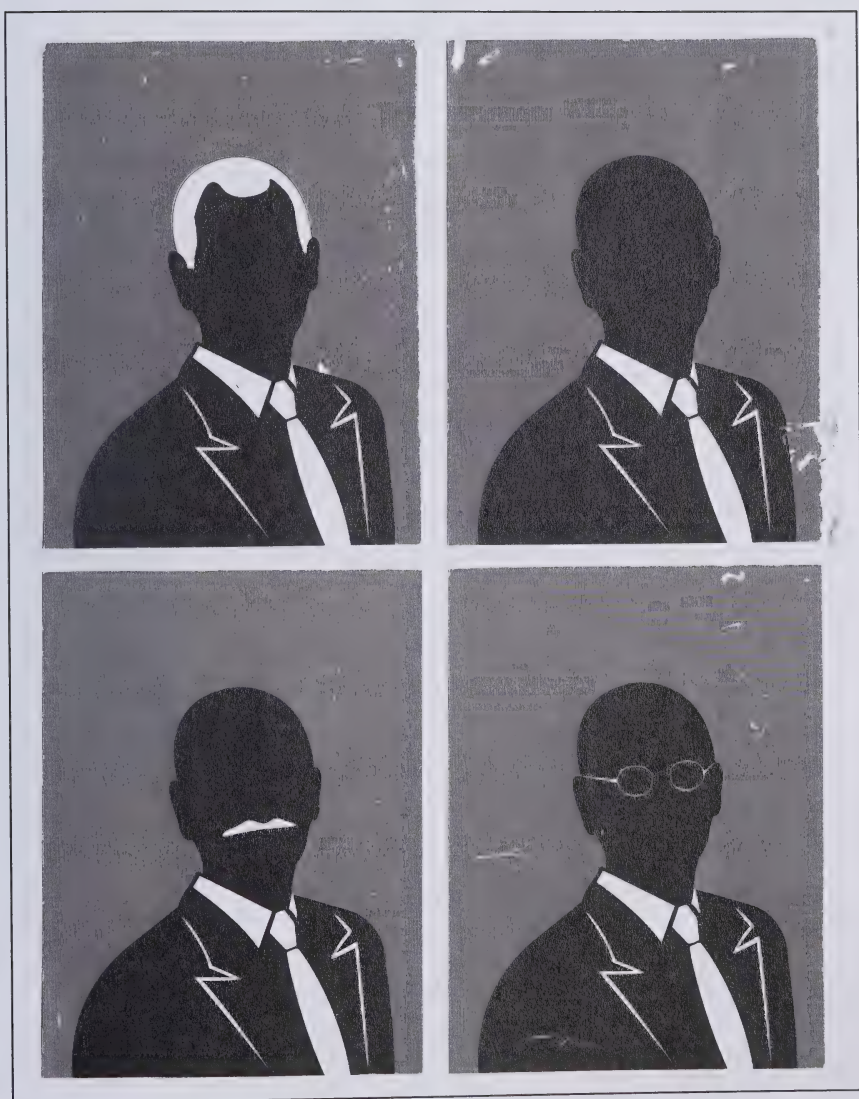


expectation, as always, made way for hindsight.  
where it was once old jazz and firelight,  
and wine that breathed life into veins,  
it is now morning breath and conversations with no dancing in them.  
it is endless cups of coffee, counting calories  
and constantly battling cobwebs for control.

it is never having enough money  
and wondering if you have enough love.

rainy afternoons still make me wistful  
for sharp pencils and silence,  
but it might surprise you to see the words I can become  
when the life beneath the day suddenly fills me. it's like sunlight in a prism.  
that is when it is the most beautiful thing, to be a magician of ordinary life.  
into this home, these walls, the countertops and floors, I build  
the poetry of living fully.  
untold ancient millions who came before are, perhaps, not known;  
though their words were never found, they remain in the simple fact that we are here.  
they, too, must have been poets, lovingly leaving  
the best of themselves within the walls.





**JACOB SUTTON**  
**COMPUTER ILLUSTRATION**

## Dad's Song

**BEN WEATHERSBEE**

An informal gesture, a sleight of hand  
 A produced grin and a shake from a leathery hand  
 A bright summer day in the company of my father  
 On the mountain we ride with wind in our hair  
 Sunshine warming our skin  
 Our smiles are easy to catch  
 And the moments we missed are within reach again  
 Taking away the time lost  
 Measuring the distance in days and not years  
 Every moment seems important as we pass the time  
 And as the land streams out in front of us  
 Our lives unfold

The truth comes and goes in the manner of  
 Sweet, bitter, and bastardy stories of youthful hellraising, young love  
 And drunken abandon  
 Tales trying to match that of my own  
 Tales trying to relate to the kid who lost his way

No more silence, no more changes to get in the way  
 A father no longer diffused through a haze of smoke  
 Wants to know his son  
 The moments already given up  
 Do not seem to matter so much on this day  
 Now there is only us  
 and what we choose to say



The day catches up as we see the sights  
Together we keep ahead of the night  
Names and places never seen  
Move beyond us  
As we recollect in the moments between

Many things to marvel at from our ride  
Many things to take in  
Too many to list or even think about as we ride back  
The land streams out in front of us as we ride back

And when I see the last light of the day catch  
in my father's eyes and I notice his worn smile  
as we end our wandering travels  
I smile to myself  
and hold onto the day







**KIM AIKEN**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## Crack Light\*

### THOMAS RAIN CROWE

*for James Still*

Where rocks grow and mud cracks on the logs and  
there is a little light at dawn or a cold burst of  
wind 'round dusk, comes through and burns a candle lower than  
a man that would brag on his lies, suck sour sop from  
an old bowl with nary a any spoon—I touch the daylight and  
the pline-blank moon of my mind in this crack light as if to  
spark the white-skinned girl up the branch with these words.

With my heart kilt like a plate of creases and greens,  
I make a match to this wick of words gone a tad soft  
in the head like a sad loaf or a sass patch of polk  
after a killing freeze. I can hear the no-never-mind that  
it don't make that she looked at me and said;  
'Why you can't dance?' that night in the jenny barn like  
I was standing there in long-johns and the size of a piss ant  
bigger than the tadwacker I was there in that moment  
of jubious grace.

Now, here in this warmhouse and sure as hen's pepper  
ill-famed in the eyes of any booby-owl or Big Eyed Bird, I  
chew cud with this ink and the dibble-dabbles of the sounds  
in my head, that bull-rag my sleep, that lost I can't keep,  
in this lack of skewbald light and rowan logs that the  
light shines through like a peeping tom called a house that  
in another time or life she might see in this light or dark  
and even though I can't dance call a poem.

*\* metaphor from Southern Mountain speech referring to the light of day which  
comes in through the cracks between the logs in a log cabin*



## Orthodox Atheist

GEORGE FRIZZELL

Like any orthodox  
atheist

I bow  
to the wisdom  
of the agnostic

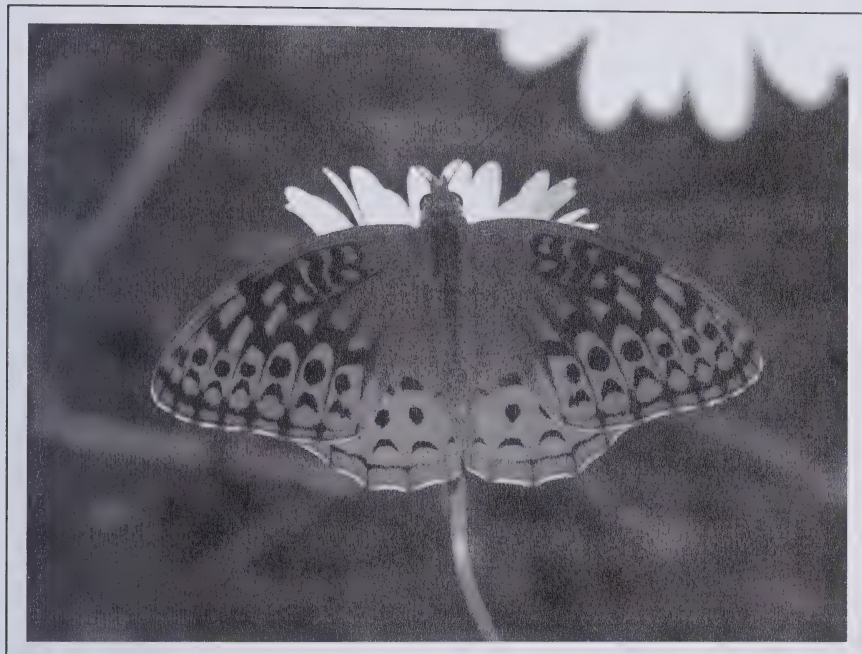
with its beauty  
of sanctimonious harmony

Who am I to deny  
the acid test  
of fundamentalists

I walk a world  
of flat out lies

I think  
the golden rule  
has been cashed in  
for higher interest  
returns





**ANDREA MINARD**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**







**CHRIS PRUETT**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## Sometime in September

BETTY HOLT

When the month of September dawns, so does the most transformational month in the calendar. Warm, blue-sky days and comfortable nights filled with the sounds of katydids eventually give way to chilly mornings and cozy, evening fires. Early September arrives barefoot and pregnant with late summer vegetables, blueberries, Black-Eyed Susans and hydrangea. My wardrobe consists of sandals and crop pants, and the wind blows gently through my open windows and doors. My hair shimmers and swirls through the sunroof of my car. Labor Day, though late summer, is still a summer holiday.

Wearing short sleeves and no socks, kids start back to school, leaving the outdoors to the enjoyment of adults. The humidity is lower, so it's a great time to take a lunchtime walk or curl up on a bench and read a book. It's still possible to get a suntan. The days are lazier but still bright and cheerful.

Then one day it slowly, subtly begins to change. After the white shoes have been put away after Labor Day, there are still other sandals to wear. Only one morning I notice my feet need a little more cover. Sandals feel too cool and exposed. The next day when I get up, my arms feel a little chilly, so I pick a long-sleeved shirt from the closet. The following night I notice the bedroom is cool when I get ready to sleep, so I close the windows. A few days later, I put a blanket back on the bed.

The cantaloupes and peaches start disappearing from the grocery stores, and apples, cabbage, and winter squash take up their places. The shadows on the road lengthen and linger as the sun's angle begins to change. One day in mid-September, in the middle of the night, I am awakened by a strange and unaccustomed noise. It is my furnace clicking on as the inside temperature has dropped below sixty.



The flowers on my porch begin to droop and disintegrate. The shorter days have curtailed their growing season. I'm now wearing long pants and long-sleeved shirts, occasionally even a jacket on the way to work. Some mornings I turn on the heater in the car. I see twinges of color in the leaves. A few drop on the ground. It's possible to feel the change in the atmosphere—drier air, increased wind. Something is happening. Life is changing. It is palpable.

By the last week of the month, all my summer clothes and shoes are neatly packed away, and my corduroys and wools have made their way to the front of the closet. Not only are my windows closed, I've pulled down the storm windows as well. My furnace is running regularly. I've switched from large salads full of summer vegetables to cooler-weather soups and cornbread. I've started indulging my primal urge to store up for the winter by gathering the apples falling on the ground and putting up apple butter and applesauce. I've packed up the deck furniture and put it away for another year.

My thoughts turn to the winter that lies ahead and the preparations that need to be made. I'll get some firewood and my first order of fuel oil. I'll dry clean my warm coats, hunt up my boots and sweaters, switch pocketbooks. Soon will come the fall holidays of Halloween and Thanksgiving, and later, just after the shortest day of the year, Christmas will arrive. I'm reminded of the poem that begins "Thirty days hath September...." In that short time my thoughts have gone from carefree summer living to preparing for the holidays and the frigid winter that lies ahead.

I drink a cup of tea and contemplate the changing of the seasons. There's always a bit of sadness about the end of summer, a process of letting go. Even though I know it will come again, dancing in merrily one day in late June, wearing Bermuda shorts and eating a sliced tomato sandwich, just itching to have a picnic in the glorious sunshine or go wading in the creek. It and I will run happily together through time until sometime in September, when one day I wake up and it has slipped away. ■

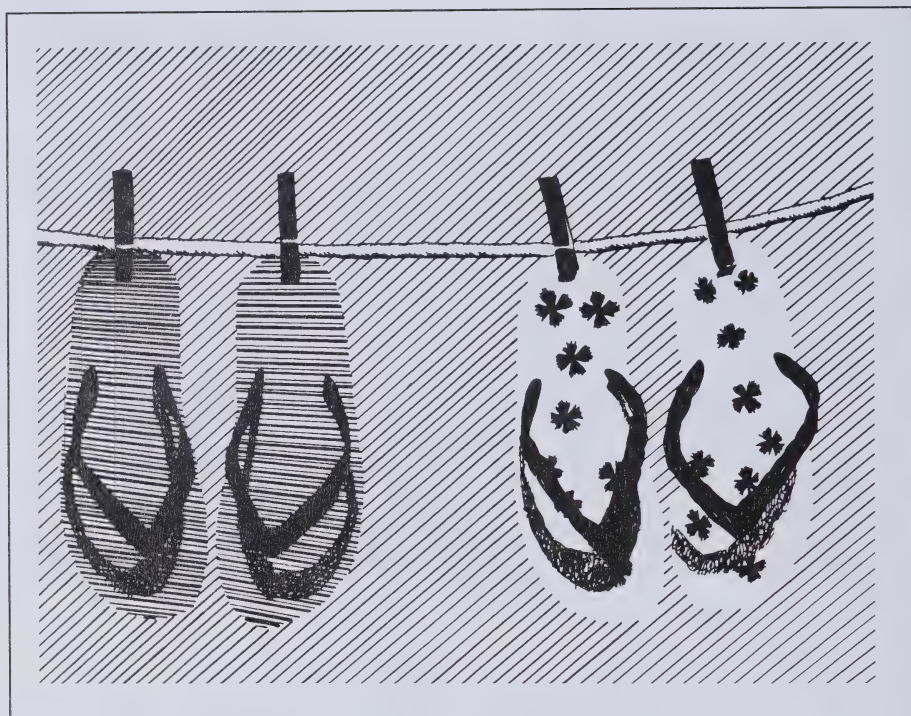




**ANDREA MINARD**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**







**AIMEE ALICH**  
**PEN AND INK ILLUSTRATION**





## A Place in Time

SHELLY CATHCART

I don't cry anymore when I leave them. This is their second year in school. I don't think much anymore about who will help them put the straw in their juice box, or comfort them when a boy pulls their hair or a girlfriend decides she likes someone else more.

Driving toward the school we see the sun rise above the Wal-Mart sign as Sophia says, "I don't want to go to school today. I always have a headache, and in PE we don't do anything but run."

"It's supposed to be cooler today," I mention. "Let's go to the park after school."

"The park is boring," Penelope replies as she rolls her eyes, leaning forward for emphasis. "Madison has a Hannah Montana jacket, and my jacket is too small. Can I have one like hers?"

My coffee spills over onto my hand as I make the turn to join the line of cars heading toward the elementary school. I remember when the girls were young, and "Let's go to the park" would bring shouts of agreement and jumping up and down. Then, we greeted the day quietly, gently. I, drinking my coffee and they, their milk bottles, we would rise in increasing brightness with the sun.

When the weather allowed, I would seat the girls in our little green plastic wagon and pull them down the road toward the park. We would tell stories on the way; Penelope was never satisfied with the ones from books we had read. "Make one up about Princess Penelope and Princess Sophia," she would say. So we would tell stories of bravery and beauty, of victory and defeat.

The girls would climb out of the wagon and tip-toe, in their two-and three-year-old fashion, over to the edge of the pond. We would walk around the edge of the water, straining our eyes, trying to spot the frog or snake that would inevitably plop into the water just in front of us, unseen.

As we walked the perimeter of the park, we would come upon the Secret Cove. Crouching, I would follow the girls the short distance to a low-flowing



creek. Penelope would sit down in the cinnamon-scented mud and explore the miniature world around her, digging her fingers into the mud to pry up flecks of silver mica and throwing acorns and bits of rock into the creek, listening to the sound they made. Sometimes this place was Mr. and Mrs. Mouse's swimming hole, and just to the left of it was where the fairies would hold their meetings.

A little further around the park, we would come upon the Bamboo Forest. They would enter bravely, cautiously, scanning the ground for snakes or anything else that might bite or squish under their feet.

"Mommy, come find me!" Sophia would yell, smiling, pulling her teeth together and jutting her chin out in confidence as she spoke. Of course, I would fail to find her in that four-by-six-foot jungle of river cane, and they would jump out, relishing the effect they could have on an adult, as I jumped back, yelling in surprise.

Still further around the park's perimeter was a pile of sand, left over from the rejuvenation of the baseball fields. Here, the girls would pause to dig and dump, to decorate elaborate lumps of sand with mighty pine straw and grass columns. Penelope would place each handful deliberately, patting it into place with the uncoordinated, splayed fingers of a child. She would make a little hole for a door, and a road that led right up to it. Sophia would inevitably become possessed with silliness—flinging sand into our faces as she flattened her structure, jumping on top of it a few times for emphasis.

In this park Penelope would try out the agility of her mind: imagining, studying, and creating, bouncing who she was off of this and that; whereas Sophia would test the strength and power of her small body.

Sophia would run ahead of us to the "play area," a gigantic plastic structure in the midst of woodchips, ten feet taller than she was. It had steps up two sides, a couple of the steepest, slickest slides they had ever seen, and a spiral ladder on another side. I remember Sophia's frustration as she would reach up her hand, the wrong foot clumsily searching for the next rung on the spiral ladder, one time falling down hard from the very top.

Using her hands, arms and legs, she would climb the steps. At the top she would jump down them—first one at a time, then two, and sometimes even three. On the



step's railing, she would hang by her arms, swinging back and forth propelled by the power of her feet. A little older, she would hang upside down by her knees, her hair brushing woodchips on the ground, her face red and victorious.

I remember the focus with which they crushed ice from the mud puddle under their sneakers. They didn't stop until it was all in tiny pieces but one. However, this did not deter them. They took that larger, thick sheet of ice and threw it. Still in one piece, they took turns stepping on and slipping off it.

The girls rode bicycles for the first time at that park. They started riding small circles on the basketball court. The excitement of being able to move those small machines all by themselves kept them riding circles for an hour or more. They eventually would ride on the sidewalk path that circled the park. When they would get stuck in the gravel or dirt parts, I, who was walking closely behind, would push them out of the mud or gravel until the path became smoother.

Their lives were overflowing with, "When you're older...." and "Don't do that!" but this park was theirs. They could balance their way across the top of the cinderblock wall, shaking off my hand, held out to assist. They could slide faster than air. They would swing higher and higher, leaning their heads back, toes pointing to the sky. If they could have reached just a little higher, they might have lifted off over the mountain top.

"Grab your backpack," I remind Penelope as we approach the school's dropoff circle. "Don't forget your lunchbox today! OK, bye, give me a kiss.... Hurry; the other cars are waiting behind us." The door closes.

With Jack, now two and a half, and baby Tom, I decide to turn left instead of right at the stoplight. Jack gets out of the car at the park, sleepy-eyed, but open to this new place. We walk, silently, down the path, now paved. "Look, Jack," I say, my voice and eyes swelling with unexpected tears, "Penelope and Sophia used to ride their bikes over there."

I can still see Princess Penelope and Princess Sophia, brave and beautiful, their little feet pedaling as fast as they could go, clumsily navigating turns. ■



## Great Granny Steeves

KAREN GILFILLAN

She was dressed in long black  
a soft white lace collar

Dove gray hair drawn back  
knotted into a tight bun

Her shoes were sturdy  
tied with black strings

Granny rocked slowly  
back and forth

as I sat beside her  
cross legged on the floor

I looked up into her  
deeply wrinkled face

She glanced down  
Gave me a little smile

Her gnarled hand fluttered low  
and patted my head

I reached up to touch the  
blue veins beneath parchment skin

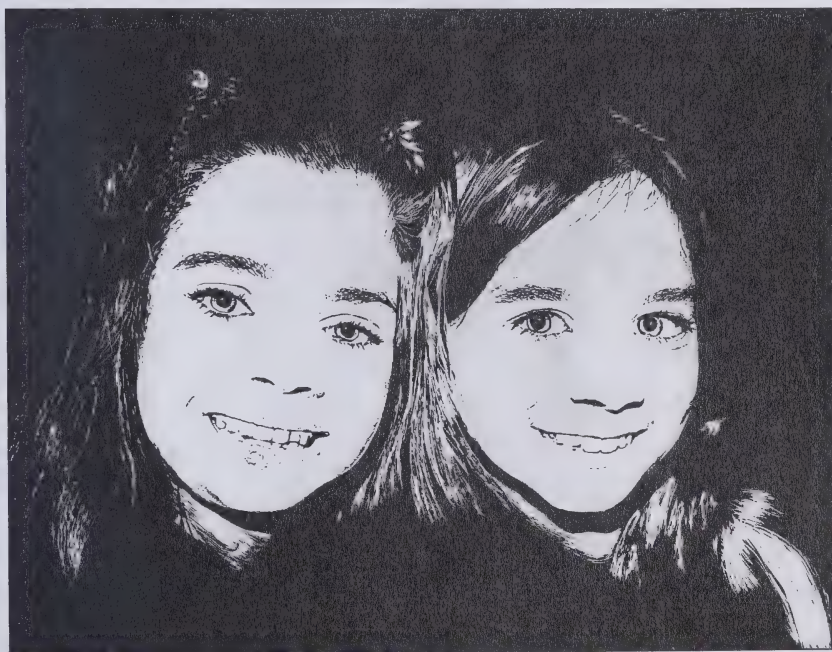
Ridges of life lived  
She did not speak

Granny led me onto her lap  
that afternoon

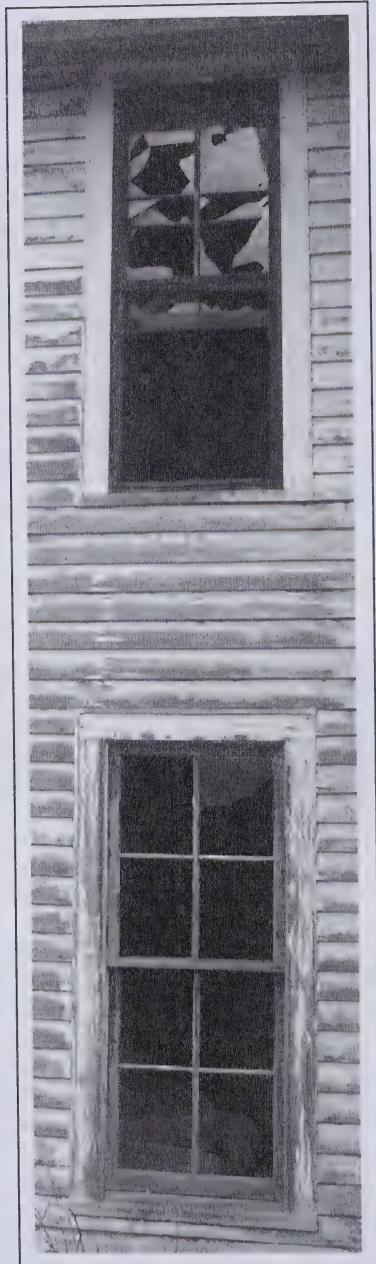
We rocked to and fro  
in the quiet of together







**BRENDA CLARK**  
**SCRATCH BOARD ILLUSTRATION**



**MISTY LACKEY**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



# Wait

## CASTANNA MILES

Alone the figure sits in the window, watching over the hustle and bustle of the lands surrounding the massive structure called home. Its eyes are dead, dull, and unsatisfied. Those eyes are eyes of one who waits, for what? The sound of ticking, *tick tock tick tock*, fills the room in which it watches and waits. A door creaks open in the background but goes unnoticed by the sitting figure. The female enters and walks to the unmoving, waiting body in the seat of the window. She calls for the body's ears to listen to her message, but they disregard her, or maybe they have become deaf. She walks closer and closer to the body, only to be called away by a voice in the hallway from whence she came. She leaves.

The figure remains unmoving, silent, waiting. The people below the window continue on with their simple routines, unaware of the watchful eyes that examine and analyze every move with dull, lifeless eyes. A rustle echoes throughout the room; the eyes come alive. They have seen what they have been looking for, and the unmoving body glides into action with the grace of a rusty robot. The waiting is over; the figure leaves the room in hurried, clumsy, jerky steps. They are waiting for the figure now. It moves quickly, down the halls, through the thresholds, and descends the mountainous stairs.

A child stands in the doorway leading into the home, eyes casting about inquiringly, almost as if something is missing. What does the child look for? The rustle of cloth alerts the child to another incoming body. With cheerful, hopeful eyes, the child looks up and smiles from ear to ear as they spot the father. The father looks upon the child with great relief and brings the smaller body to his own in a warm, strong embrace, a smile lighting the handsome face. The wait is over; the child is home...balance has been restored. ■



**DON BOWEN**

**PEN AND INK ILLUSTRATION**





# King of Beasts

**BILLIE JO RICH**

He is the king of all beasts. He sits with his tail curled around his massive paws, twitching slightly at the tip, gimlet eyes glittering, ears leaned almost imperceptibly back to show just how serious he is about it all. His glorious mane is camouflaged against the shadowy darkness of the background. He watches the other creatures moving about, unaware of any danger. They are beneath his contempt, weak and pitiful things. But he is not tempted—he has already fed and is content for now. His stomach is stretched to capacity, and he is spent from the effort of the hunt. What he yearns for is a nap. He would love nothing better than to stretch out his fantastic length in the warm sun, but he cannot; he must always remain alert and wary of other predators that might think themselves more wily than he.

There is slight movement near the corner of his vision. It is a skinny, tan-colored creature, almost skeletal, with canine features sharply exaggerated to the point of being ridiculous looking. No majestic grace or feline stealth; just clumsy and awkward movements. The beast king's head rises slightly higher, and he sighs. There is no challenge anymore. The gangly creature shuffles about, sniffing loudly, licking things, and occasionally giving an awkward bound of a few steps before stopping to inspect some new object. He has a large head and ridiculous flopping ears, bulbous watery eyes and a tiny ineffectual snout. His belly is round and his legs are thin, giving him a bovine appearance. The creature pants and drools as his flimsy tail wags from side to side. This foolish creature is not worthy of notice.

The king pads away silently through the dry grass. His nostrils quiver as he searches the wind for scent of anything new. Nothing. He glides





across the vast land, sauntering, secure in his territory. There is a vague whispering of the breeze through the brush that has turned brown from the sun, a quiet rasping together of dead leaves. The stream is near. His acute hearing picks up the sound of the cool, clear water rushing over the smooth stones. He can smell the rich mud and the damp, green moss that borders the trickling water.

Suddenly his ears prick up; in that same moment he is instantly frozen and alert. He quickly assesses the danger level, determines it to be zero. After all, he is the one whom other creatures fear. He continues to the water source. The water is cool on his tongue as he laps his fill. He yawns, baring pearly fangs and curling pink tongue, as he strolls into the brush for an afternoon nap. Finding the perfect spot, stretches out on the soft grass where he may rest, concealed from the view of other predators. Soon his lean sides rise and fall rhythmically. One paw twitches in his slumber. The lazy afternoon is quiet save for the vague sound of buzzing insects.

When he awakens, the shadows have grown longer, and he is invigorated once more. It is time to hunt.

He hears the clumsy noise of something—some creature—shambling about nearby. He lowers himself as close as possible to the ground, dragging his soft belly across the packed earth. He becomes a serpent, slithering toward the sound with utmost stealth. He crouches beneath some low-hanging branches, concealed by the veined leaves and twisted foliage. His breathing is imperceptible; his eyes widen without blinking—the pupils have dilated to almost complete blackness.

This creature crashes into view, so large it almost takes up the king's entire field of vision. But for all the creature's massive size, it lacks grace and stealth, seeming to either be unaware or uncaring of the noise it makes as it walks about raised on its hindquarters. The creature is ripping up great clumps of



grass and earth, lifting them to its pink, crusted snout before dropping them back to the ground. Then the creature spies the king, and hesitating only a moment begins to lumber toward the king's hiding place. What is this hideous monstrosity, lifting forward filthy curled claws, making this insidious mewling sound? The king of beasts' ears flatten against his lowered head, his tail twitches, eyes locked on the approaching horror.

It happens in a flash, almost too quick for belief: the instinct of every living creature kicks in, flight or fight.

It's going to be a hell of a fight.

The king of beasts streaks out, a blur, with teeth and claws bared. His outrage is audible as a low, spine-tingling growl. He manages to inflict some slight damage as he whirls about, with his claws and teeth ripping and tearing. He is like a tornado, a force of nature. And, just as quickly as it began, it ends. He has done all he can to this particular adversary, and he knows that to end it now will leave him to fight another day. So, before the behemoth can land any blows (evidently size and speed do not go hand in hand with these things), the king decides to scoot. As he darts once more through the brush, he hears the forlorn braying of the monster fading behind him.

And suddenly—he can't believe his eyes!—the spindly brown thing leaps awkwardly out into his path, blocking his escape! If this scene were captured on high-speed film, this is what we would see: the king of beasts hesitates only for a minute, immeasurable space of time, then barrels onward. As he literally runs upward and over the slow-comprehending beast, he is reminiscent of a human athlete. More specifically, an athlete known by the nickname of "Air." There is a dizzying flurry of claws and gnashing teeth, a horrendous high-pitched squeal of pain and fear. And a belated flinching and crouching of the hopeless and terrified inferior beast as the king sails overhead, past and out of sight altogether. The king of beasts does not know, nor would he care if he



did know, that the tan creature cowers shivering in the same spot for a little over an hour after this incident has passed before finally daring to slink away, fearfully looking back over his bony shoulder and glancing all around himself from time to time. He trembles constantly hereafter, seemingly uncontrollably.

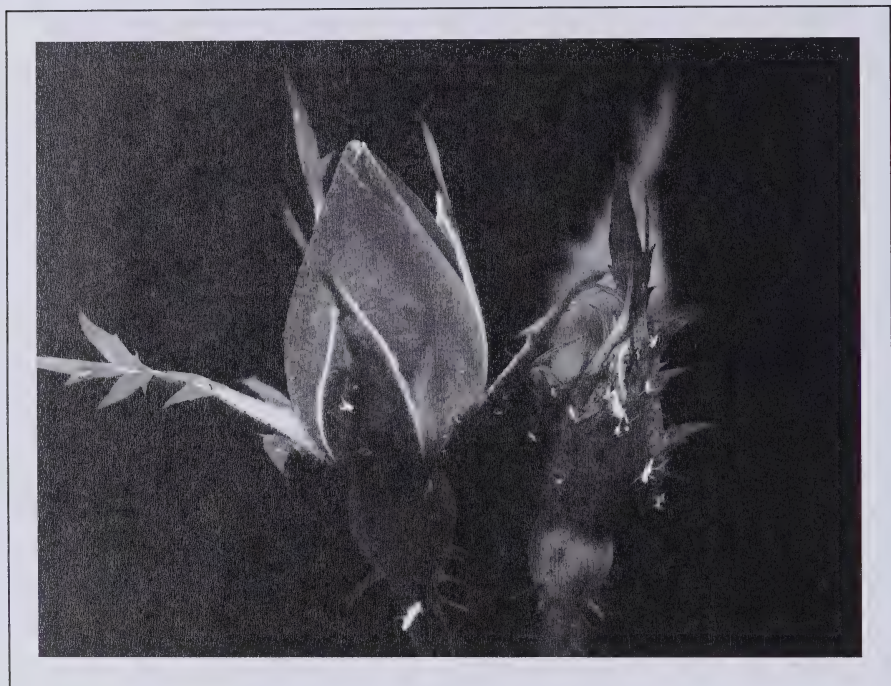
Suddenly, a sound drifts through the “jungle.” It is the slow whirring sound, faint but steady. It stops and after a second or two of silence, there is a scraping sound, metal against tinny metal. The king of beasts trots toward the sound with this tail held high. He doesn’t even pause when he sees the terrified and traumatized Chihuahua shivering in the grass and actually winds himself about the legs of the human child seated upon the grass. The child, sporting several bright red scratches about his ankles, glowers at the now-happy and playful king, who then makes a beeline for the open door. It’s supertime. ■





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# Creating Scents of My Life

HENRIETTA LAMBERT

Scent evokes memories. The scent can be fleeting, floating by on wisps of air. The scent can be within us, pouring through every fiber of our being, creating the essence of our thoughts. Scent can bring a multitude of colors spilling around us. Sometimes our memories conjure up the scents of days gone by, beautifully transporting and locking us within the memories of the past. At moments, without trying or even thinking about it, the scent of childhood and first memories flows through me.

It is the scent of sunbeams dancing yellow and lemony on Grandma's floor. It is the scent of Grandma, which flows through me when the Sweet Williams bloom along the highway in early spring. It is Grandma's scent I taste in my memory when I remember the meatloaf or the made-from-scratch pancakes. Throughout the years, I have tried to capture the essence of her scent in my cooking, but I have not succeeded. Even though I cannot capture the scent, it still lingers and invites my memory to taste its sweetness. It is Grandma's scent when my heart flows to memories of the springhouse, whose scent is of dark earthiness and cool springs. It is the scent of cotton and rolling the thread on my finger, forming the knot, which ties my heart to my sewing machine. The freshness of this scent transports me to the room with the dancing yellow sunbeams as I sit on the floor beside Grandma and stuff the dolls she makes.

It is the scent of Grandpa, of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and the old tin lunchboxes. This scent travels with me as I walk backwards in time and carries me down the little trail in front of the house when he comes home from work. It is the scent of Grandpa as I see the silver running through my hair, and, laughingly, I am a little girl sitting on the arm of his chair searching his hair for gray ones to pull out. It is the scent of Grandpa that tickles my nose with the blue steel of guns and the warm dirt of hounds baying. It is the scent of Grandpa and the lost art of "coon-huntin'" when I daydream of the old garage with coon hides tacked around it. It is the scent of oily dust, the forbidden territory of the garage, as I sneak in

and run my toes through the coolness. Is is the scent of Grandpa as my memory fondly plays with “hog-killin” time. It is the wonderful mash scent that travels through my senses as I help Grandpa slop the hogs. It is the scent of excitement that races through my memory as I see Grandpa hand me a stick and a knife then tells me to carve it smooth. It is the scent of hay, chickens, cows, and pigs that finds me, running playfully through the pasture of my mind. It is Grandpa’s scent, the scent of freshly made buttermilk and rhubarb, that causes me to remember my nickname, “Rhubarb.” It is the scent of Grandpa, for he was the only one to ever call me Rhubarb.

It is the scent of Momma as I catch the whiff of fresh sheets hanging on the line, sheets that are waving like spirits from the past as I see the scent flowing iridescently around them. It is the scent of Momma that whispers around me with the light, crisp, spring breeze that blows through the house. It is the scent of Momma that flows from my fingers as I try to make a bed and obtain the crispness of Tide, Downy, and Clorox. It is the scent of Momma, the essence of a perfectly made bed that I have not obtained in my adult life. I have tried to capture Momma’s scent when I fold a fitted sheet, only to fail. My sheets are rumpled and the crispness is not there. It is the scent of Momma when I see myself as a little girl hiding under the covers with the biscuit I sneaked to bed. It is the scent of Momma when I finally realized the crumbs told on me, and I, in amazement, find I cannot hide anything from her. It is the scent of Momma when vinegar is strong and pungent in the air while dyeing Easter eggs. It is the scent of Momma that fills the kitchen while the pungent vinegar circles the room, Momma’s scent of Easter eggs, deviled eggs and potato salad. It is the scent of Momma that swirls around me as I think of pastel color. It is the scent of Momma that flows and cascades over a yellow waterfall, tumbling over the faintly pink and pale blue rocks into the shimmering light green pool at the bottom. It is the scent of Momma when I see these colors, for they represent life. I am the oldest child of six, and the scent of Momma is on my tongue and fills me with life as I remember sneaking a taste of baby formula or a teething cookie. It is the scent of Momma, of Clorox and diaper pails, that I carried into my life and why I would only use cloth diapers with my children.



It is the scent of Momma when I recall the thrill of riding the escalator when Sears was located on Patton Avenue. It is the scent of Momma when I catch the smell of diesel, which instantly takes me traveling to see Santa at Sears. Memories of Santa wisp around the clouds of smoke that spew forth from the trucks and buses. It is the scent of Momma that runs playfully through the hazing smoke of diesel that turns into the wonderful colors of red and green. It is the scent of Momma that flows through a warm home at Christmas with the wonderful scent of cinnamon inviting me to walk in a pine forest. It is the scent of Momma running playfully with the colors of Christmas cascading around it.

It is the scent of Daddy when I encounter the heat of summer with the sweat traveling down my forehead. As I wipe it away, each droplet has a memory inside its bubble. It is the scent of Daddy as I burst the bubbles, one by one, and the memory comes shooting out. It is the scent of Daddy when I look at the stars that turn to feathers when they shoot across the sky. It is the scent of Daddy that travels to earth when the star feathers explode. It is the scent of Daddy when the tiny feathers land on my memory and tickle me. They tickle me with thoughts of Daddy saying, "Now say, bullshucks!" in front of tourists that are taking his picture. It is the scent of Daddy that causes my mouth to water when I recall the best French fries in the world. It is Daddy's scent that travels and tickles my senses from the small, brown paper bag full of salted, cooked just right French fries. It is Daddy's scent that bubbles in a Coke full of peanuts. It is Daddy's scent laughing at me for sticking my tongue in the bottle while holding the peanuts in. It is Daddy's scent of laughter that has traveled through the years because I still stick my tongue in the top of a bottle. Daddy's scent of laughter swirls like the purple scent of grapes as I realize I stick my tongue out the side of my mouth when I concentrate on a task, just as I saw him doing when I was little. The scent of Daddy waves on the shimmering heat of summer when I smell watermelon and cantaloupe. The scent of Daddy tumbles over the river rocks when I take my children fishing. My children, grown now, own a fly shop. The scent of Daddy swirls in the fog laying low in the valleys as I stand at the top of the mountain and look out at the sea of purple or blue mountains rolling as far as I can see. The scent of Daddy trails like



wisps of smoke as it winds around the trees, and I recall sitting on a pot of fish to hide them from the park ranger.

The scent of spring tickles my toes as I wait for May 1, the first day of the year to be able to run barefoot. The scent of spring causes excitement as I remember the grass growing greener in the pasture. The scent of spring creaks like leather as I anticipate riding my horse more often.

The scent of summer fondly twirls around my memory like the june bug tied to a string. The scent of summer fills my hunger like Jack's cookies and red Kool-Aid as I, with childlike faith, march into the church for Bible school. The scent of summer braids trails of honeysuckle and morning glory bursting with color.

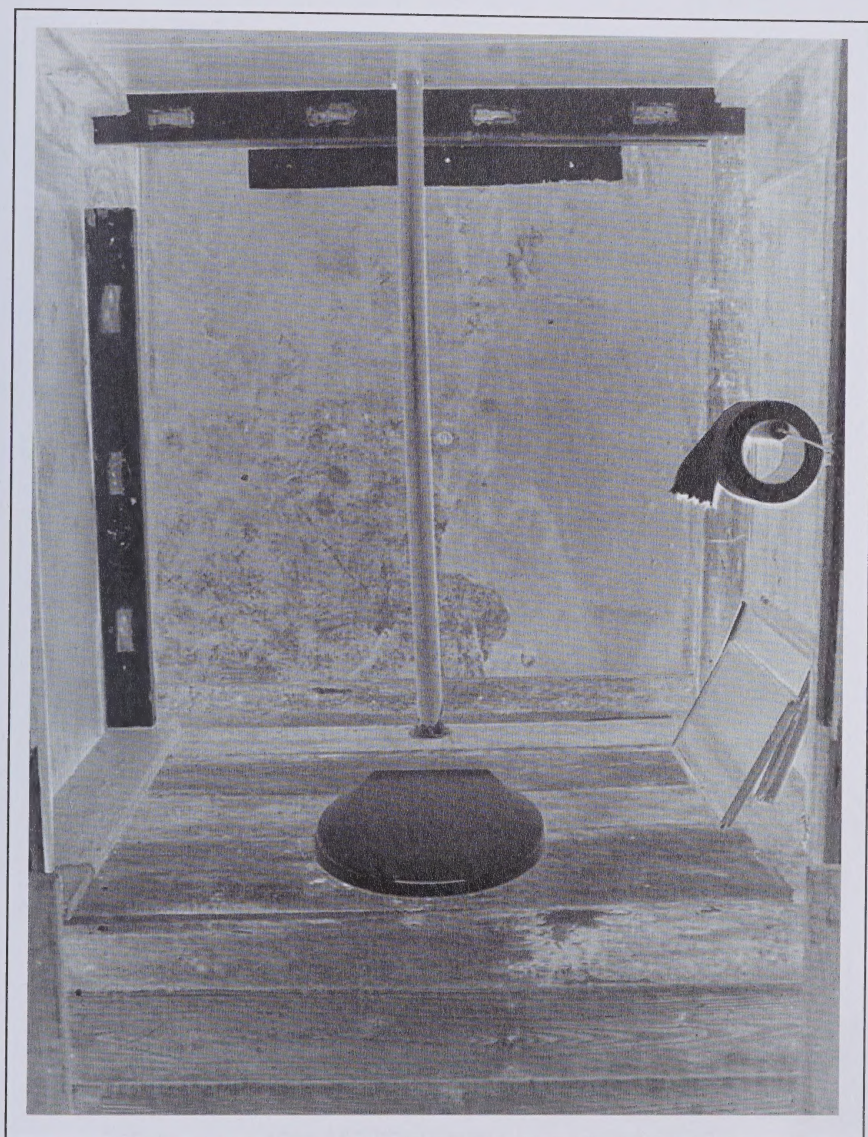
The scent of fall is old dust and the warm taste of cinnamon. The scent of fall is the crispness in the air while the trees dance with a kaleidoscope of color. The scent of fall are the colors within my home.

The scent of winter is longing for spring and the knowledge that it is just around the corner. The scent of winter is the freezing blue scent dripping from melting icicles and the snowy white icing drifting on a cake. The scent of winter is the glistening colors of silver and gold.

The scent of our lives mystically swirls around us full of color. Each of us has the ability to associate or create the scents of life. Close your eyes and, quite possibly, you will soon be dancing with a zillion shooting stars of color. The scent of my daddy, my grandma and my grandpa are wisps of air I catch in my memory. The scent of my momma is still full of life and creating the wisps of air I can catch one day. Scent evokes memories. ■







**MISTY LACKEY**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**



## Call For Submissions

Manuscripts for the 2011 edition of *SCC Milestone* will be accepted through December 1, 2010. In the event that funding is not secured for publication, submissions will be held and considered for the next issue.

Each submission should include the author's name, address, and phone number on every page.

Essays, local history, poetry, and short stories—as well as black-and-white artwork—may be submitted. All submissions should be typed or printed, and prose is limited to 2,000 words.

Seven people whose manuscripts or works of art are selected for publication will also receive cash rewards:

- First and second prize in poetry
- First and second prize in prose
- First and second prize in artwork
- Cover

Students, faculty, staff, and alumni—along with residents of Macon, Swain, and Jackson counties and the Qualla Boundary—may submit manuscripts to the *SCC Milestone*.

For additional information, contact Southwestern Community College's Public Information Office at 828-586-4091, extension 265.





